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*THE LIFE AND ADMINISTRATION*  
OF  
ROBERT BANKS,  
SECOND EARL OF LIVERPOOL.









THE  
LIFE AND ADMINISTRATION  
OF  
ROBERT BANKS,  
COND EARL OF LIVERPOOL, K.G.  
LATE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY.

*COMPILED FROM ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS.*

BY  
CHARLES DUKE YONGE,  
REGIUS PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AND ENGLISH LITERATURE IN THE QUEEN'S COLLEGE, BELFAST;  
AND AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF THE BRITISH NAVY," "THE HISTORY OF FRANCE  
UNDER THE BOURBONS," ETC.

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# *THE LIFE AND ADMINISTRATION*

OF

## LORD LIVERPOOL.

### CHAPTER XVI.

Visit of the Sovereigns to England—The Prince of Wales excludes the Princess from Court—The Princess determines to go abroad—Conduct and treatment of the Princess Charlotte—She escapes from Warwick House—Act to permit the exportation of corn—Lord Liverpool's avowal of the principles of free trade—Transfer of Norway to Sweden—Affairs of Italy—Congress of Vienna—Eagerness for aggrandizement of Russia and Prussia—Discontent of Alexander with Lord Castlereagh—Mr. Cooke's account of the progress of affairs at Vienna—Arrangement of the Duchy of Warsaw—Financial difficulties—Unquiet state of France—Lord Castlereagh's opinion of the Czar—Return of Napoleon from Elba—The question of Saxony.

THE treaties between Great Britain with her different allies and France were concluded in the course of May, and immediately afterwards England was fully occupied with the reception of the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, with many of the inferior German princes, and a long train of ministers and generals who had gained distinction in the late campaigns. When about to return to France Louis XVIII., on taking leave of the Prince Regent, had acknowledged the greatness of his obligations in emphatic but well-deserved thanks.





“He should always consider,” he said, “that under God he owed his restoration to his Royal Highness.” And Lord Castlereagh thought that it would be a closing of the war with a compliment to which Britain was well entitled, for the sovereigns who had been her allies, before they returned to their respective countries, to pay a visit to her shores. It could hardly be considered in any other light than that of a recognition of her pre-eminence; and he hoped also that it might not be without some influence on political questions. He was aware that Alexander was already jealous of the fulness of the gratitude to England to which Louis had given utterance, and also that he cherished schemes of extension of his own territories which we should feel bound to oppose when the moment for their discussion should arrive. He desired therefore to conciliate him now by a show of attention; and, at his suggestion, the Prime Minister proposed to the Prince Regent to send all the foreign sovereigns at that time in France an invitation to cross over to England. It was gladly accepted. The Emperor of Austria, indeed, before the day fixed found his attention too peremptorily claimed by the affairs of Italy to allow of a further prolongation of his absence from Vienna, and sent Prince Metternich instead on a special mission to excuse his non-arrival; but his brother Emperor and King Frederic William, with their retinues, crossed the Channel on the 6th of June, escorted by a squadron under the command of the Duke of Clarence, and three weeks were spent in a series of festivities such as Europe perhaps, and this island certainly, had never beheld. Every kind of compliment, suitable and unsuitable, was heaped upon the two sovereigns. They were made Knights of the Garter, citizens of London, and graduates of the University of Oxford. A military review was necessarily marred by the absence of the greater part of our army in France or America; and, even had all the regiments employed in those countries been at home, their

numbers must have appeared insignificant when compared with the mighty host which had so recently been seen arrayed in actual warfare. But when our visitors repaired to Portsmouth, and beheld a fleet almost as numerous as that which had conquered at Trafalgar put out to sea to exhibit the manœuvres of a naval battle, they witnessed a sight which the united force of all their own dominions could not have furnished, and a display not to be forgotten of the real invincibility of England. Alexander is said to have avowed himself deeply impressed with the evidences of individual wealth and general prosperity which he saw around him, and which supplied an argument for deference to our wishes and judgment that, in spite of the pertinacity with which he afterwards clung to his views of territorial aggrandizement, was probably not without effect either on him or on the foreign statesmen, to whom the displays presented to their eyes were as novel as to himself.

The most immediate consequences, however, of these royal visits were a revival and reproduction before the world of those differences in the royal family which had caused the minister so much vexation and embarrassment in the preceding year. The Queen, who, from considerations of her own age and of the unhappy condition of her husband, had lived in great retirement since the establishment of the Regency, considered herself called upon, by the restoration of peace and the presence of these august visitors, to emerge for a moment from her seclusion, and gave public notice of her intention to hold drawing-rooms ; while the Prince Regent thought proper to notify formally to her Majesty that, "while he considered that his own presence at her Court could not be dispensed with," it was nevertheless his fixed determination to meet the Princess of Wales neither there nor elsewhere, "upon any occasion, either in public or private." It seems superfluous to enter into the question of the propriety of thus calling the attention of even foreigners to his domestic disagreements, or, on the

other hand, of the difficulty, after the conduct which his Royal Highness had previously adopted, of abstaining from so doing. Nothing could possibly be more absurd than the line taken by some of the leaders of the Opposition in the House of Commons, who, while protesting a wish to avoid any discussion which might tend to disturb the unanimity of the country at a moment of such triumph and exultation, had yet the boldness to hold the ministers responsible<sup>1</sup> for the Prince's letter, of which they had had no previous knowledge, and which was fraught with annoyance and embarrassment to the whole Cabinet. The Princess herself behaved with far more prudence and propriety than she had exhibited in the previous year. She wrote a respectful letter to the Queen, from whom she had received the first intelligence of the Prince's decision : she expressed her deep mortification at being thus ostentatiously excluded from her mother-in-law's Court at such a moment ; but " though she could not so far forget her duty to the King or to herself as to surrender her right to appear at any public drawing-room to be held by her Majesty, that she might not add to the difficulty and uneasiness of her Majesty's situation she yielded, in the present instance, to the will of the Prince Regent." To her husband she wrote in a strain of dignified complaint, (there is reason to believe that Canning, who had always expressed a favorable opinion of her, and notoriously stood high in her confidence, was the framer of her letter), urging on him the peculiar hardship of inflicting this public slight on her at a moment of universal exultation, when, besides that the expected visit of many illustrious strangers must make it still more galling, " their daughter would for the first time appear in the splendour and pub-

<sup>1</sup> When Lord Castlereagh deprecated all discussion on such a subject, Mr. Whitbread replied that "it was ridiculous in those to talk of deprecating the agitation of a question who had it in their power to remove the necessity for it altogether." (Parl. Deb. xxviii. 56, June 10, 1814.)

licity becoming the approaching nuptials of the presumptive heiress of the empire." And when she failed, as she must have expected to fail, in producing any alteration in her husband's determination, she sent copies of her letters, not as before, to the newspapers, but to the Speaker of the House of Commons. They were read to the members by the clerk, and, as a matter of course, provoked a repetition of the proceedings of the previous year, though in a somewhat milder form. In the House of Commons the advocates of the Princess had the unfortunate knack of always taking a wrong step. And on this occasion Mr. Methuen, who put himself forward as her champion, moved for an address to the Prince Regent, to "beg him to be graciously pleased to acquaint the House by whose advice he had formed his fixed and unalterable determination never to meet the Princess." It was a repetition of the absurd and ill-judged attempt that had been made before to represent the conduct of the Prince, in what he looked on as a private family matter, as a State affair, for every proceeding in which his ministers were responsible, while it was only too evident that in fact his Royal Highness was taking no advice at all, but was solely influenced by his own temper and headstrong resolution; and as such even the chief leaders of the Opposition declined to support it. The language, however, which had been held by some of the speakers gave the Princess an opportunity of performing one gracious action not ill-calculated to leave behind her a favorable impression if she should quit the country, as she already entertained a secret intention of doing. From circumstances partly connected with the embarrassments of the Prince her income had fallen below the sum which had originally been judged fair and necessary for her to receive; and those who represented as a grievance that the greater part of it depended solely on her husband's pleasure, and was in no way secured to her, had certainly some colour for their complaints. It could scarcely be denied that the Princess was entitled to be placed, as to her

pecuniary affairs, on a more satisfactory footing. And the ministers, not unwilling to divert the attention of the House from a scandal which could not be healed to an inconvenience which could easily be removed, a few days afterwards brought forward a proposal to fix the income of her Royal Highness at once, and under the sanction of an Act of Parliament, at the sum to which she would have been entitled had she become a widow, and to charge the whole of it on the Consolidated Fund. A resolution, as a necessary preliminary to the bill by which this arrangement was to be effected, was agreed to. But the Princess declined increasing "the burdens of the people on account of the circumstances in which she was placed," and in another letter to the Speaker requested that the amount named for her might be reduced from 50,000*l.* to 35,000*l.*

The sacrifice of so considerable a sum was received with very general applause, though, from a subsequent declaration of her Royal Highness, it appeared that her motive for making it was not so much a consideration for the people, as for the degree in which the acceptance of the entire grant might be thought to fetter her personal liberty. Nor, though supplying her partisans with an occasion for extolling her liberality, did it alter the feeling entertained towards her by the Prince himself. It was in vain that Mr. Tierney tried to derive from the transaction an argument in her favour. When he pointed out that the fact of her Royal Highness's income being thus settled and guaranteed by Parliament was in itself a recognition of her rank and dignity which could not be treated lightly or explained away, there was manifest force in his reasoning; but, when he added the expression of a hope that "on the approaching day of public thanksgiving her Royal Highness would find her place in the procession, though not particularly near to the Prince Regent, and her place in the cathedral, than which nothing could be more pleasing to the House and to the country," he could hardly have expected his suggestion to be realized. He was

alluding to the great national thanksgiving for the restoration of peace, which was to take place at St. Paul's on the 7th of July, at which the Regent, with both Houses of Parliament, the royal family, and the ministers, were to be present. But no place was allotted to the Princess. And the mortifications of this kind to which she was exposed throughout this year of general exultation had probably their full share in leading her to adopt the determination to which, before the end of the month, she thus requested Lord Liverpool to procure the assent of her husband :

Monday, July 25th, 1814.

The Princess of Wales requests Lord Liverpool to lay before his Royal Highness the Prince Regent the contents of this letter without delay.

Impelled by the motive of restoring tranquillity to the Prince Regent, and of ensuring to herself that peace of mind of which she has so long been bereft, the Princess of Wales, after very mature reflection, has resolved to take such measures as may enable her to go abroad ; a resolution which cannot appear strange to the ministers of the Prince Regent, after the Princess's unmerited sufferings of nineteen years, and the recent aggravated indignities which have prevented the Princess even from seeing the nearest relations and dearest friends of her beloved father, the Duke of Brunswick.

The Princess of Wales wishes her former line of conduct to be clearly understood, that, in appealing to the feelings of a generous nation, the only protector which remained to her since the lamented indisposition of his Majesty, the Princess has ever acted solely on the principle of self-defence, and in vindication of that honour which is dearer to her than life.

The Princess of Wales would perhaps have postponed her intended departure till the marriage of the Princess Charlotte had taken place, had she not been informed that the unprotected state of the Princess of Wales, in these peculiar circumstances in which the Princess Charlotte must have left her mother, formed the chief impediment to the union with the Prince Hereditary of Orange. It is the sincere wish of the Princess of Wales to remove every obstacle to the welfare of

her daughter, and to the tranquillity and peace of mind of the Prince Regent, which induces the Princess of Wales to request that Lord Liverpool will lose no time in communicating to his Royal Highness the Prince Regent her wishes, and her intention to go to her native country, to pay a visit to her brother, the Duke of Brunswick.

The Princess of Wales has also to apprise Lord Liverpool of the following circumstance, to be laid before his Royal Highness the Prince Regent. The Princess is desirous to resign the Rangership of Greenwich Park, the late Duchess of Brunswick's house, and also the adjoining house, in which the Princess of Wales has resided for several years (namely, Montague House), in favour of the Princess Charlotte; and she trusts that this request will be graciously granted, as the Princess of Wales considers it as the last favour she shall have to demand of the Prince Regent.

The Princess of Wales takes this opportunity of explaining that her motive for declining a portion of the liberal and munificent grant voted by the House of Commons was not any want of a due sense of gratitude to the House of Commons or to the Crown, but that she thought the acceptance of the whole sum would have imposed upon her the duty of maintaining a state which would have been incompatible with the intention which she now communicates to Lord Liverpool; but she thought she could not at that time mention this intention without giving rise to new discussions, or incurring the imputation of wishing to excite them. For the same reason she has deferred this communication till near the rise of Parliament, and till she herself is on the eve of quitting town for Worthing, where, if she should obtain the Prince Regent's gracious permission, it would be her wish to embark, without returning to town again.

The Princess of Wales feels proud to assure Lord Liverpool that her most fervent prayers will be offered up to the Omnipotent for the prosperity, glory, and blessing of this great nation.

The Regent was probably never more sincere than when, in replying to this letter, he commanded Lord Liverpool to assure the Princess that "he did not wish to throw any impediment in the way" of her arrangements, though he



declined conferring on the Princess Charlotte the ranger-ship which her mother desired to transfer to her. A man-of-war was ordered to be provided for her; and with respect to the omission of the foreign sovereigns to visit her, and to the rupture of the Princess Charlotte's engagement to the Prince of Orange, Lord Liverpool "was commanded to say that, from the course of the transaction itself, the Prince Regent could not consider the peculiar circumstances of her Royal Highness as having formed the obstacle to that marriage. Upon the other point he was commanded to acquaint her Royal Highness that no obstruction was placed by the Prince Regent in the way of the allied sovereigns or the other illustrious personages visiting her Royal Highness before they left England."

The occurrences of the next few days show that, while no one ever had greater need of judicious advisers than the Princess, no one also ever was surrounded by men whose counsels were more full of mischief. It requires a more than usual benevolence of judgment to think that the warnings which in the following letter the Princess reports as having been addressed to her with respect to her intended journey were dictated by either the sound acuteness of a lawyer, or even the faithful anxiety of a disinterested friend. The style of the letter seems to show that it is the unaided composition of the Princess herself:

Wednesday, August 3d, 1814,  
Sompting, Sussex.

The Princess of Wales is under the necessity once more to trouble Mr. Canning with a few lines. In the first place the Princess sends enclosed the copy of a letter which she wrote yesterday, after having read in the newspaper the speech of Mr. Tierney on the rising of Parliament, to Mr. Whitbread, not being acquainted personally with Mr. Tierney. The Princess shall be much obliged to Mr. Canning if he will communicate the letter to Lord Liverpool, and make any use of it he pleases. In the second place, the Princess is obliged to mention to Mr. Canning also, that Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Brougham, and Co.

have apprised the Princess, either from motives of too great anxiety for the welfare of the Princess of Wales and Princess Charlotte, or from a mere Opposition spleen, to anticipate misfortunes before they really exist, which the Princess trusts such cruel proceeding never will take place; namely, they are fearful, if she was to stay for a long space of time out of this kingdom, the Prince Regent and his ministers would endeavour if they could obtain a divorce in favour of the Prince Regent to be able to marry again, to have a son, and to rob in this manner Princess Charlotte of her right of succession to the throne; and if such measures were taken by the sovereign and his ministers, the Princess of Wales would be liable to be accused of being the cause of a civil war, as it would make a great disturbance in the kingdom about the future succession. The Princess desires Mr. Canning to communicate to the Earl of Liverpool this letter, that she certainly shall not change her resolution of going abroad; but that if such hints should be given in the newspapers of such plans as the Princess has mentioned above, the Prince Regent nor his ministers could be surprised at the Princess's sudden return to this country, as much reluctance and disagreeableness she should feel about it; however miserable it would make her, she would willingly make the sacrifice for Princess Charlotte, which would be also due to her own character. The Princess begs Mr. Canning to impress this much upon Lord Liverpool's mind, that the Princess acts from pure and noble principles in the intention of going abroad, as it is for the peace and tranquillity of the Prince Regent, the Princess Charlotte, the country, and herself, of which all parties have been bereft so many years. That if such an event was now planning by the Regent or his ministers, they would not be surprised if the Princess would immediately return to England, to maintain her rights, and those of her daughter. The Princess is persuaded that Mr. Canning's sentiments upon this point will be congenial with her own, in perceiving that the Princess acts only from motives of self-defence, for her daughter and herself, if she should be forced to return to this country.

Canning of course executed her commands in forwarding

the letter to the Prime Minister, whose comment on it is subjoined:

*Private.*

Coombe Wood, August 5th, 1814.

MY DEAR CANNING,

I return you the Princess of Wales's letter, which I have read, as you may suppose, with no little amusement. I know not what assurance it will be possible to give her: the Prince could not divorce her (if even he were desirous of doing so), except by the authority of Parliament, and Parliament could not authorise a divorce in her Royal Highness's case any more than in any other, unless upon the proof of adultery. I do not see therefore that the Princess of Wales is less safe in this respect abroad than she would be in England. Her Royal Highness's friends must be aware of this, and must mean to insinuate that her conduct is less likely to be correct upon the Continent than when she is under their influence, and has the advantage of their counsels: such an insinuation is not very respectful to her Royal Highness. At all events, however, as there is no power to prevent her Royal Highness's return to this country, and as no condition to this effect has been attempted to be imposed upon her, I do not see why she need be alarmed. I have taken copies of her letter, but, if I have done wrong, I will destroy them.

Ever sincerely yours,

LIVERPOOL.

Canning himself fully agreed with his friend, and frankly announced his sentiments to the Princess. He reported to her that "the alarm suggested by her Royal Highness's friends appeared to Lord Liverpool to be wholly visionary. No proceeding for a divorce could be instituted in Parliament on behalf of the Prince Regent on any other ground than such as would form a foundation for such a proceeding in the case of any subject of the realm. Her Royal Highness would therefore be as safe from any such danger abroad as at home, and there was no power to prevent her from returning to this country whenever she might think it necessary. Nor was any condition imposed

or attempted to be imposed on her Royal Highness to limit the exercise of her own discretion in that respect." Such was the substance of Lord Liverpool's reasoning, with which Mr. Canning felt bound to add that he fully concurred.

It is mentioned in Lord Liverpool's letter to the Princess that the Regent refused to allow his daughter to succeed her as Ranger of Greenwich Park. In fact, one of the most mischievous consequences of the rupture between the royal pair was that it caused an estrangement between the father and his daughter, who took her mother's part with very little disguise. The Princess Charlotte was now eighteen years old, and in the preceding winter an arrangement had been made that she should marry the Prince of Orange,<sup>1</sup> which she herself had broken off on learning that it would be expected that as his wife she should reside a considerable portion of each year in Holland. If the suspicions of some of those about the Court were correct, the necessity for such an arrangement had not been one of the least inducements to the Regent to approve of the match, and, in proof of the correctness of these suspicions, they appealed to the fact that in every respect the Princess was still treated almost as a child. She had no separate establishment, no control over her own movements, and was suffered to appear at hardly any of the entertainments which were given to our foreign visitors. It is at all events quite certain that the Prince was extremely displeased at her breaking off her engagement, condescending to send the Duke of York to scold and the Bishop of Salisbury, who had been her preceptor, to threaten her;<sup>2</sup> and, what

<sup>1</sup> "The Prince of O. it is said, wishes his wife to go with him to his own Dutch land, and so does the Prince Regent, who does not like a rising sun in his own ; but report also whispers that the *risingsun* is aware of this, and will not consent to the marriage unless she is allowed to shine in her own dominions."—*Diary of Lady C. Campbell*, date May 21, 1814.

<sup>2</sup> "The Duke of York said the Princess Charlotte laboured under a great mistake, for that she seemed to consider herself as heir appa-

was still more extraordinary, prompting the Emperor of Russia and the Duchess of Oldenburg to remonstrate with and reproach her, though their interference in such a matter could only be considered an act of the grossest impertinence. And, probably because he was so displeased, the Princess of Wales expressed the highest satisfaction; she was, as she stated, "in transports" because her daughter "had manœuvred and conquered the Regent so completely that the marriage was wholly broken off."

After some very angry discussions the Prince Regent made a last attempt to bend her to his will by dismissing all her attendants, to whom she had become accustomed and attached, proposing to replace them with other ladies who might be able, as he hoped, to influence her as he desired. But this step, by its excessive severity, wholly unwarranted when the age of the Princess is considered, defeated its own object by driving her to a step which made this scandal as notorious as the other. In her terror she fled from Warwick House in a common hackney-coach across London to Connaught House, where her mother was at that time residing. And, though she could not refuse to return with the Duke of York and Lord Eldon, whom the Regent sent to bring her back, (even her mother admitting to her that she could not with decency contest the will of her father, so that her absence only lasted a

rent, whereas she could hardly be considered as presumptive heiress. The Bishop told her that, if she did not write a submissive letter to the Regent, holding out the hope that, in three or four months, she might be induced to renew the treaty with the Prince of Orange, 'arrangements very disagreeable to herself would take place;' and the Emperor, who tried to force her to a private interview with him, after trying in vain to persuade her to see the Prince of Orange, *who was in the house*, took up a newspaper which was on the table, and pointing to the name of Mr. Whitbread, said, 'she was giving up an excellent marriage, one essential to the interests of her country, and all to be praised by a Mr. Whitbread.'"—*Autobiography of Miss Knight*, i. 286 sq., ii. 4 sq.

very few hours), her flight with its reasons could not be kept secret, and was in itself a renunciation on her part of the intended marriage which could not possibly be recalled.

The Regent in his anger set no bounds to the intemperance of his language.<sup>1</sup> He refused access to her even to some of her uncles: and one of them, the Duke of Sussex, as if to show that it was possible to behave worse than even his brother, undertook to give additional publicity to a scandal which every one who wished well to the royal family desired to bury in oblivion; from his place in the House of Lords he gave notice of his intention to make a formal motion on the subject, and at once addressed a series of questions to Lord Liverpool as to the treatment which was being pursued towards the young Princess; implying by the language in which they were framed his belief that she was being subjected to a rigour which amounted to cruelty. Among other things he asked whether her Royal Highness "was in that state of liberty in which persons considered not in confinement ought to be; whether she was allowed the use of pens, ink, and paper, and the liberty of writing and receiving letters;" these and others of his questions being in themselves an open censure of the only person who could possibly have imposed such restrictions on her.

It was well that the Prime Minister was a man who had the art of rebuking such a display of ill-temper with dignity as well as firmness. It was no doubt possible to imagine circumstances which might justify members of either House in inquiring into the regulations laid down by the sovereign for the treatment of his family. But it was obvious that one of the members of that family was the very last person who could with any decency invite such a public discussion of his conduct. And it was

<sup>1</sup> He told Miss Knight that "he was glad that every one would now see what the Princess was; and that it would be known on the Continent, and no one would marry her." (*Autobiography of Miss Knight*, i. 306.)

notorious that the Duke of Sussex was influenced solely by personal pique at a want of deference which he conceived the Regent to have shown towards himself. Lord Liverpool even thought it requisite to apologise to his brother peers for taking any notice whatever of the questions thus addressed to him; and, while he absolutely refused to give them the slightest answer, he appealed to the House itself for their approval of his silence. The Prime Minister's reproof was reiterated by the Chancellor, who declared that, so improper were the questions, if Lord Liverpool had answered them he would never again have spoken to him. From so enduring an indignation Lord Eldon might possibly have in time relented: but not a single peer could be found to defend the duke, who made a lame apology in the form of an explanation that he had never meant "anything disrespectful" to the Regent; and a day or two afterwards Lord Grey prevailed on him to withdraw his notice of motion. It may be that his ill-advised interference even exasperated the Prince Regent's severity towards his daughter; for still the next year, when she was nearly twenty years old, she was treated like a child, being not even allowed to receive visits from any one without her father's written permission for that individual;<sup>1</sup> and these unreasonable and indecorous restric-

<sup>1</sup> "*April* 11, 1815.—A list is given and signed by the Prince Regent of what people she is to see. Only Miss Mercer Elphinstone and Lady Warwick and her daughters to be suffered to see her in the evening. She is to go once a week to the play or the opera, but to go away before it is over, and not to court publicity. . . . *May* 6.—At the opera. Princess Charlotte was in the Regent's box, which is in the pit row, and so much sheltered by the orchestra as to render those who sit in it very little visible. 'God save the King' was sung by all the performers when she appeared, and there was a little clapping; but it has been given out that, if there was much applause, she will not be allowed to come again. . . . *April* 28.—The Duchesse d'Angoulême told me she had written to the Princess Charlotte, and wished to visit her; but had received an answer from her saying that she begged she would ask the Prince Regent's leave: which she thought very odd, as it implied that Princess Charlotte could not ask it herself. . . . *April* 22.—

[I received

tions, which were never relaxed till the spring of 1816, when the marriage of the Princess with Prince Leopold was settled and announced to Parliament, were more than once laid hold of by the Opposition as a pretext for rendering the Ministry unpopular. Perhaps the advisers of the sovereign have rarely been placed in a more provoking situation than those who were now in that position, and who were thus forced to defend, or at least by their silence appear to approve of conduct which was adopted against their advice and entreaty whenever their chief had the opportunity of representing to their royal master their opinions on the subject. That the hints and covert attacks of the Opposition failed to injure them out of doors must be attributed mainly to the general respect in which Lord Liverpool himself was held, and to the conviction which every one felt that no measure of harshness towards any one could have been suggested by one of so moderate and conciliatory a temper.

Parliament rose at the end of July. The past session had not been an eventful one, the minds of all people having been first too much absorbed by watching the events of the war, and afterwards by exultation at its triumphant termination, to have much attention to spare for any legislation which was not of the most pressing importance. One measure however claims a mention, as the first step towards a great alteration in the commercial system of the country, an Act which permitted the free exportation of corn. For the last fifty years the exportation had been subject to restric-

I received a letter from the Princess Charlotte, which gave me sad accounts of the unkind manner in which she is treated: not being spoken to by her father, nor ever seeing him but when the Queen is in town. The Duchesse d'Orleans and Mademoiselle had visited her; and she was to be allowed next day to return the visit, but to have no further communication. She is not allowed to go out in an open carriage, and a coach always makes her sick."—*Miss Knight's Diary*, ii. 55 sq. The same journal, however, shows that the rule about the open carriage was afterwards relaxed.



tions varying with the price of the day in our own markets, and the bill which now did away with, or suspended, those restrictions, was avowedly only a temporary measure, since an enactment which should permanently regulate the importation for the future was, with general approval, postponed for consideration in a future session, by which time it was hoped that more accurate information on the subject might be obtained. But it deserves to be recorded that the arguments by which Lord Liverpool supported the bill which was now passed were founded chiefly on the correctness of the general principle of free trade, which was as yet acknowledged by few, but which he declared to be the one "sound system of legislation on such matters which ought never to be departed from, except upon some special ground demanding particular regulations;" and, in a lesser degree, on the belief that "though a free exportation of corn might not perhaps produce any material practical benefit to one part of the United Kingdom" [England], "in Ireland it was well known it would confer a most essential advantage." In fact no minister ever felt more deeply or acknowledged more consistently the great importance of stimulating Irish industry in every possible way as the only solid foundation on which to build up Irish tranquillity and Irish prosperity; whilst his early assertion of freedom of trade as the proper principle of all commercial legislation shows that on these matters he was in advance of his age and of his colleagues, and was prepared to lead them along a path of which, as yet, of former ministers Pitt had been the only pioneer.

To the discussion of the treaty of peace, the lofty language in which Lord Liverpool proclaimed the principles by which he and his Cabinet had been guided, and the elevated position in which Great Britain had been placed and left by the issue of the war, allusion has already been made. It was a subject on which there could hardly be, by any possibility, a difference of opinion. But the

execution of another treaty, which involved the transfer of Norway from Denmark, to which it had hitherto been annexed, and its incorporation with the dominions of the King of Sweden, provoked a vigorous attack from the Opposition. The arrangement had not originally been the work of British politicians, but was one which had been made by the Czar with the Crown Prince of Sweden before the French invasion of Russia, Alexander having purchased the aid of Sweden in the war with Napoleon by undertaking to compel Denmark to exchange Norway for some provinces in Pomerania ; but in a treaty which, at the beginning of 1813, we also concluded with Sweden, we had sanctioned and adopted this agreement, even binding ourselves to co-operate with Russia and Sweden in the subjugation of Norway if she should resist the transfer. And as Norway now rose in arms to maintain her connexion with Denmark, while Bernadotte claimed the performance of our engagement, we despatched a squadron to blockade the Norwegian harbours.

The act was made the subject of a formal motion by Lord Grey, who condemned it partly on the general principle "that the sovereign of a state could not transfer the allegiance of the people," partly on the ground that Sweden had not performed her engagements to us so faithfully and fully as to be entitled to claim the aid which we were giving her ; adding also a third argument, that it was inconsistent with the interests of this kingdom to augment the power of Sweden, since in all probability she would as a general rule be found on the side of France rather than on ours. Lord Liverpool declined discussing the general principle, (and indeed there never was a time when the recognition of it would have been more inconvenient, or have led to more perplexing inconsistencies, since it was clear that many of the arrangements which must arise out of the cession that France was compelled to make of her conquests, and which were to form subjects of discussion between the allies, would be absolutely incompatible with

it). But he defended the measure in question, first by the argument that the King of Denmark, to whom Norway had hitherto belonged, had no ground of complaint, since Sweden had restored him territories of at least equal importance to counterbalance Norway. "She actually gave up Gluckstadt and Holstein, which she had conquered, while Jutland lay entirely open to invasion. The King of Denmark, for the purpose of saving the remaining part of his dominions, and of recovering the possession of Holstein and Gluckstadt, voluntarily made a cession of Gluckstadt; and Sweden at once performed all the conditions which were the price of the cession of Norway. The foundation of Lord Grey's argument was that, though a country might cede a part of its dominions to another Power, it was optional with the part so ceded whether it would receive its new master or not. He asserted, on the contrary, that not merely in one but in every treaty which had been concluded in Europe for many generations the principle had been universally acted on, that a country had a right to cede a part of its dominions, and that the cession was binding both on the party ceding and on the part ceded; and this was more the case in the dominions of the King of Denmark than in any other country, since nowhere else was the king so absolute and his authority so unlimited and unrestricted. Moreover, he denied that the resistance of Norway to Sweden on this occasion was the free act of the nation. It was the result of the intrigues of Denmark, which, after having obtained from Sweden the full price of the cession, was endeavouring with signal bad faith to avoid performing what she had been paid for. When the war was drawing to its close the King of Denmark sent over to Norway his own presumptive heir Prince Christian, who immediately proclaimed Norway an independent kingdom, and took on himself the title and style of Prince Regent of Norway. And even now there were a number of Danes in the country having neither property nor business in Norway, but being there solely as agents of

the King of Denmark, for the purpose of stimulating the Norwegians.<sup>1</sup> Prince Christian had even dared to assert that he was sure of the assistance of the British Government. On the whole the case was this. Denmark had procured peace by ceding one of her provinces, and that province had been induced to resist the cession. The British Government was bound by its share in the treaty with Russia and Sweden to bring the matter to adjustment, and had a right to call on Parliament to arm them with the power necessary to fulfil their engagement."

Lord Grey's motion was defeated by the overwhelming majority of 115 to 34; and one of similar proportions upheld the Ministry in the House of Commons: in fact the principle for which Lord Grey contended, sound as it may be in the abstract, though occasionally invoked by the weak, has never been regarded by the strong. There had been many precedents for slighting it before, there have been many examples of its impotency to obtain a hearing since; and it must be remembered that, though the enemies of the Ministry compared the fate of Norway to Poland, there was in reality no resemblance between the two cases. Norway did not lose her independence, for she did not enjoy such a state before. She only changed her master; and the case of the minister was, in all candid eyes, the

<sup>1</sup> By the original treaty between Sweden and Denmark, dated January 14, 1814, the King of Denmark "for himself and his successors renounces for ever and irrevocably all his rights and claims on the kingdom of Norway, &c." which "shall belong in full and sovereign property to the King of Sweden, and make one with his united kingdom." This treaty and the proclamation of Prince Christian of Denmark to the Norwegians, dated February 16, 1814, in which, in the character of "the Hereditary Prince of Denmark's throne," he denounces "the Government which has entertained the ignominious thought that flattering words and vain promises could induce them to infidelity towards their King," and excites them to resist the transfer of their country to Sweden, are both given in the *Annual Register*. (*State Papers*, 379—386.) It is impossible to conceive a greater breach of faith than the hereditary Prince's proclamation.

stronger because Britain, in her accession to the treaty between Russia and Sweden, had been influenced by no selfish view of acquisition. She was so far from gaining anything that she had been willing even to give one of her own conquests, Guadaloupe, to Sweden to secure its accession to the grand alliance. And, indeed, if she herself or any other country was entitled, if she chose, to retain her conquests, the admission of such a right was in itself a refutation of the claim advanced by Lord Grey of the right of every country to choose the sovereign under whose sway it was to remain or was to pass. In the re-settlement of the different kingdoms whose former boundaries had been effaced by the revolutionary war, the whole tenour of the arrangements was a practical denial of that claim; and the ministers in rejecting it in this instance were but acting in accordance with the judgment of every man of statesmanlike mind in Europe. The result appeared to show the correctness of Lord Liverpool's opinion, that the antipathy exhibited to the transfer was prompted by emissaries of Denmark, and not by the spontaneous feelings of the Norwegians; for after one or two actions, which the superiority of Bernadotte's skill easily decided in his favour, Prince Christian abandoned his undertaking, and agreed to evacuate Norway; and, as soon as it was left to itself, the Diet of Christiania passed an almost unanimous vote in favour of the union with Sweden, so that by the first week in September Lord Liverpool could speak of the question to Lord Castlereagh as settled:

*Private and confidential.*

Fife House, September 2d, 1814.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

I wish you joy of the termination of our difficulties as to Norway. I say termination, because, as far as we are concerned, I consider them as terminated. I sincerely hope and believe that the assembly of the Diet at Christiania will lead to the peaceable union of Norway to Sweden; but, whether it does or not, we have fulfilled our engagements by continuing the

blockade until the Prince Christian had abdicated, until the Norwegian fortresses were in possession of the Swedish troops, and the Government of Sweden brought fairly into communication with the Diet on the subject of their connexion with Sweden. And, with relation to their internal government, we not only have not guaranteed Norway to Sweden, but we declined doing so ; and nothing can now prevent the union of the two countries but disputes upon internal points between themselves.

I am perfectly aware that it will be very desirable that nothing should be said at present as to this being our view of the question. It could answer no purpose, and might stimulate the party in Norway who are hostile to the union with Sweden to resistance, and preclude the advantage of any eventual mediation on our part.

I thought it might be material, however, that you should know my feelings on this subject, which are completely conformable to the line of argument which I adopted in the House of Lords in the last session, when the question of Norway was under discussion. Though our policy respecting the union of Norway to Sweden has always appeared to me to be right, I confess I felt for some time that the question was the most awkward and embarrassing of any in our European politics. I wish we may be able to get over the question of Naples as well. I shall be anxious to hear what passed between the King of France and yourself on this point, as it appeared by one of Sir C. Stuart's last despatches that it was one of the subjects on which his Majesty was desirous of having a personal communication with you.

I am, yours, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

The affairs of Italy were more embarrassing to the allies in general, from the conflicting interests which at all times have given France, Austria, and Spain a right in their own eyes to interfere in the affairs of that peninsula, and which were now especially complicated by the circumstance that Napoleon's brother-in-law, Murat, was still seated on the throne of Naples under the recent guarantee

of most of the allied sovereigns.<sup>1</sup> And they had been made additionally perplexing to ourselves by the incompetency and blunders of Lord W. Bentinck, who, after doing all the harm which a total want of military capacity could effect in Spain, had returned with his army to Italy, and there, in absolute defiance of his instructions, had issued a bombastic proclamation, in which he announced his intention to deliver Italy, as our armies (under very different guidance) had delivered Spain.<sup>2</sup> Lord Liverpool's views on this subject

<sup>1</sup> By a treaty concluded with them in January 1813 he had joined the alliance against Napoleon, on receiving a guarantee of the possession of his dominions.

<sup>2</sup> A letter from Lord W. Bentinck himself throws a good deal of light on the general feeling of at least a large section of the Italians at this time :

*"Most secret.*

*"Genoa, April 29th, 1814.*

*"MY LORD,*

*"Lieut.-Col. A'court, who is the bearer of my despatches to your Lordship, enjoys my full confidence ; but the communication I am now about to make may affect the lives of so many individuals that it is unknown to him, and I have thought it better to confine the secret in my own breast. I transmit to your Lordship the original papers, and shall keep no copy either of them or of this letter.*

*"On the 24th, the Neapolitan General Filangieri arrived here in disguise, wrote me the enclosed letter, transmitting a note from General Carascosa to General Nugent. I saw the general the same night, and he immediately returned to the army in the same night, without being discovered by any one.*

*"He told me that there was a general plan formed in the Neapolitan army to demand from Murat a free constitution. The execution was to take place as follows : He said that a part of the army were actually on their march to Naples ; that the King was immediately to follow : and that it was understood that two divisions, under Carascosa, would remain, or would not march immediately. It was proposed that when these two divisions, upon their return to Naples, had passed the frontier, that a letter should be sent to Murat expressing the desire of the army. He read me a copy of the letter, which, after adverting to the disturbed state of some of the Neapolitan provinces, and to the general discontent, states that these circumstances have been kept from his ears by the evil counsellors who surround him. It adverts to a remonstrance made some time ago by his generals upon the state of affairs, which he refused to listen to, and threatened to shoot those who*

may be gathered from the following letter to the Duke of Wellington, who was now our ambassador at Paris :

Fife House, September 2d, 1814.

MY DEAR DUKE,

I am much obliged to you for your letter of the 20th ult., and am happy to find that your reception at Paris has been so satisfactory.

Castlereagh had only time to write before he left Paris on the American question. He has promised to make his reports on other points by a messenger he will despatch upon the road.

had signed the address. It goes on to ask, very respectfully, for a free constitution, and expresses attachment to him and his family, and their desire that they should continue to reign as their constitutional monarchs. He told me that all the Neapolitan part of the Guard was with them, that officers high in Murat's confidence were also engaged, and that measures had been taken for sending emissaries throughout the kingdom ; that he deprecated the idea of effecting this revolution by any assistance of the people, who might possibly be led into great excesses.

" His object in coming to me was to ask my assistance in two ways. First, he said the only fear they had of failure was from the effects of Murat's own personal bravery, and, by some great act of apparent confidence and courage throwing himself among the soldiers, who he thought would not resist such an appeal to their feelings. They did not fear his resistance. Their first request, then, was that I would by some means or other contrive to keep him at Naples, and prevent him from going to the army when they should declare themselves. His second request was, that, as they received their pay only every fifteen days, I would lend them five hundred thousand francs to enable them to continue the payment of the troops. If this could not be a public loan, they begged it might be a private one, for which they were ready to give ample security. I answered that, much as I wished them success, yet having made an armistice with Murat, the honour and good faith of my nation forbade me from lending myself, either directly or indirectly, to any proceedings of hostility, and that I must positively refuse taking any part whatever in the transaction.

" General Filangieri is one of the famous Filangieri, is a clever man, and distinguished officer. He was sent to me by Murat, upon my first landing at Leghorn, to propose a plan of operations. He related to me an anecdote of Murat's versatility, according to the admirers of that prince, of his insincerity and weakness according to others. General Filangieri, on his return, delivered to Murat a *Moniteur*, which



I am pleased, however, upon the whole with the account Sir C. Stuart<sup>1</sup> gives of his conversation with Talleyrand, in his despatch No. 126. Upon the point of the Sardinian succession it is impossible not to concur with the French Government. Our ideas, likewise, very much agree on the subject of Poland, and I feel as much anxiety as he has expressed for the removal of Murat from Naples, provided it can be done without a war ; but the more I have reflected upon the subject the more I am convinced, that, for all our interests, but especially for those of France, every effort must be made to prevent the sword being drawn in Europe under any pretence for a few years to come. I should hope, however, that the defect of Murat's title to the throne of Naples may induce him to accept of a compromise, particularly when he finds that the King of Sicily will consent

the latter opened and read in his presence. It contained some success of Augereau. He said the King was quite wild with joy, and said that, if he continued successful on their flank, the allies must be driven across the Rhine. It did not appear to be at all their wish to get rid of Murat, much less to see the restoration of Ferdinand, whose character and cruelty they seem both to despise and fear. They seemed to flatter themselves that, under the restraints of a free Government, Murat, to whom he attributed the most despotic principles, could not do them any harm.

"As Murat is the most distrustful man in the world, and as I am confident at this moment, when other nations are making efforts for their own liberty, he will look upon every one as a revolutionnaire, so I should have been much disposed to suspect that General Filangieri might be the spy of Murat sent to discover my sentiments, and the degree of assistance I might be inclined to afford ; but as General Nugent has been so long serving with the Neapolitans, he must be well acquainted with the individuals, and his favorable opinion of General Filangieri must remove this suspicion. I must, however say that the impression left upon my mind, from the whole of the general's conversation, did not leave with me a very sanguine expectation of the result.

"I have the honour to be, my Lord,

"Your Lordship's most obedient servant,

W. BENTINCK."

<sup>1</sup> Sir C. Stuart, a son of Lord Bute, was afterwards Lord Stuart de Rothsay. Sir C. Stewart, who about this time was made Lord Stewart, was brother to Lord Castlereagh, whom he succeeded as Marquis of Londonderry.

to receive no indemnity for the crown of Naples ; that the Kings of France and Spain will not acknowledge him ; and that he may have the pledged faith of all the Powers of Europe for the alternative proposed to him.

Upon the subject of Austria and Prussia, we must always expect a degree of jealousy on the part of every French Government. It is quite essential, however, to any balance of power, that these two monarchies should be made respectable. The principle recognised in the early part of this year, that Austria should have a population in the whole of about 27,000,000 of souls, and Prussia one of about 11,000,000, appears to be quite reasonable, and ought to give no umbrage to France, particularly when the extent and advantages of the French empire are considered on the one hand, and those of the Russian empire on the other.

With respect to the nature of the Germanic constitution, that may, I think, be fairly left to the German Powers. It must be the interest both of Prussia and Austria, when their limits are once defined, that neither should encroach upon the subordinate states ; and France and Russia will always be sufficiently powerful to prevent any projects of partition on the part of the preponderating German Powers. I see no serious difficulty, therefore, in an amicable arrangement of all these questions, and I should feel very much disposed to act with perfect frankness towards the French Government on all of them.

I congratulate you on the turn which affairs have taken in Norway. I am quite sure that under such circumstances our policy was right on this question, but yet I felt events might take a course which would make it the most awkward and embarrassing of any in our European politics. The union of Norway and Sweden will, I hope, now take place without any further effusion of blood ; but at all events the abdication of Prince Christian, the surrender of the fortresses, and the negotiation which the Swedish Government has opened with the Norwegian Diet, relieves us from any further difficulty in the business. We may possibly be called in as mediators, but it cannot be expected that we should go to war with either party if they cannot now agree.

We had prepared an answer to the note of the American Commis-

sioners before we received Castlereagh's letter, and very much in the spirit of the memorandum which he sent to us. Copies of these papers shall be transmitted to you in a few days. Our Commissioners had certainly taken an erroneous view of the line to be adopted. It is very material to throw the rupture of the negotiation, if it is to take place, upon the Americans, and not to allow them to say that we have brought forward points as ultimatums which were only brought forward for discussion, and at the desire of the American Commissioners themselves.

The American note is a most impudent one, and, as to all its reasoning, capable of an irresistible answer, which, if it should be necessary to publish it, I am persuaded will have its proper effect in America.

I do not think there is much chance of the negotiation proceeding at present, but I incline to think that, after the answer we have now sent, the American Commissioners will refer to their Government for further instructions. In this, however, I may be mistaken.

We shall anxiously await the progress of your negotiation on the abolition of the Slave-trade. I had a letter from Wilberforce yesterday, which proves to me that the Abolitionists in this country will press the question in every possible shape. We must do therefore all we can, and at least be able to show that no efforts have been omitted on our part to give effect to the addresses of the two Houses of Parliament.

I am, &c.,

LIVERPOOL

*To the DUKE OF WELLINGTON.*

Other arrangements of still greater magnitude were also pressing for decision. They had formed no part of the great treaty of peace that had been concluded between the allies for one side and France on the other, though they rose out of it; and, as that reduced the kingdom of France to "its limits such as they existed at the period of the 1st of January, 1792," it left the countries which that kingdom had annexed by right of conquest, and of which the same right had now stripped her, at the disposal of her conquerors, some of whom desired not only to recover what

they had lost, but to extend their dominions at the expense of those sovereigns or nations which in the course of the late war had been ranged on the side of Napoleon. It had been agreed that, to discuss and decide upon these matters, a congress should subsequently be held at Vienna, and accordingly, in the last week of September a body of diplomatists from the principal nations of Christendom assembled in that capital. If the question had been only what disposal should be made of the spoils of France, Louis could have claimed no voice in it; but, as the future peace of Europe was admitted to depend on the adjustment of a fair and proper balance of power between the different continental states, in that point of view he had as clear an interest in the impending deliberations as any other sovereign. And as the English Ministry had already discovered that they should have great difficulties to contend with in enforcing the policy of moderation which they had laid down for themselves, and which they were eager to bring the other Powers to adopt, as the best if not the sole foundation for permanent tranquillity; and as it was certain that the interest of France would lead her to take the same side as themselves; they supported his claim to a voice in the discussions, and finally plenipotentiaries not only from France, but from the Peninsular kingdoms, from the Pope, and even from Sweden, though her affairs, as we have seen, were already settled, were added to those of England, Austria, Russia, and Prussia.

The difficulties proved to be far greater than had been anticipated, so great that more than once they appeared likely to lead to instant war, from the rapacity of Russia and Prussia, and the personal arrogance and vanity of the Czar. In strict justice no nations could have less right to profit by the overthrow of France, and especially to expect our countenance and assistance to profit by it, than those two. For at Tilsit Alexander had eagerly grasped at the alliance with Napoleon, avowing his hatred of us to be among his chief inducements to such a change of

policy. And Frederic William had at all times shown the greatest eagerness to enrich himself at the expense of the British sovereign by the acquisition of Hanover ; and, as will be seen hereafter, had not even now entirely given up the idea of obtaining a portion of that Electorate.<sup>1</sup> But these personal considerations, as they may almost be called, Lord Liverpool with his Cabinet had the magnanimity to disregard ; the British Government looked at the last deeds of both countries, and in that view fully admitted that they had a right to share in Napoleon's spoils (even while we, who had the greatest right of all, disclaimed all such pretensions for ourselves), and to be compensated for the losses which they had sustained ; and moreover that the general policy and interests of Christendom recommended such compensation so long as it were confined within reasonable bonds. So little, however, were Alexander and the Prussian sovereign, who was now acting in avowed co-operation with him, inclined to moderation, that they more than once threatened to maintain the claims which they advanced by force of arms rather than abandon them ; and nothing but the firmness and force of character of the Prime Minister at home and of Lord Castlereagh abroad prevented a war from breaking out between those who had so recently been friends : a war which, besides the disgraceful appearance of being a quarrel for the spoils of a vanquished foe, would have had the fatal consequences of disabling them all from making the least resistance to Napoleon in the ensuing year. Alexander even coveted some of the possessions of his allies, demanding the whole of the original Duchy of Warsaw, which included some of the provinces which in the partition of Poland had fallen to Prussia ; and intimating views of restoring a separate political existence to that nation in a way that evidently threatened Austria with the loss of her provinces also, endeavouring too to

<sup>1</sup> *Vide infra*, letter from Lord Liverpool to Lord Castlereagh, dated October 14.

carry matters with so high a hand that he even declared, with an arrogance which showed the weakness of his character fully as much as the military strength of which it boasted, that he would not condescend to admit any discussion of the validity of his pretensions, because he had 400,000 men under arms, and the master of such a force had no need to argue. On her part Prussia was willing to cede her share of Poland to him, because she hoped for an indemnification on a magnificent scale in a more genial climate, and in a quarter which would give her greater weight in the affairs of Europe. She claimed not only a considerable territory on the left bank of the Rhine, which the reduction of France to her ancient limits seemed to have left without a master, but also the entire kingdom of Saxony. The whole of that territory had been in possession of the allies ever since the battle of Leipsic, and its king had provoked the especial displeasure of all the allied sovereigns by the bad faith with which, after having once made his peace with them, he had reunited himself to Napoleon on the first gleam of good fortune which for a moment shone upon the French standards in the summer of 1813. Even Lord Liverpool and Lord Castlereagh admitted that, on his own merits, he had no claim for mercy, much less for indulgence. They could only urge the sparing of him as an act of generosity, and for that virtue it was very difficult to obtain a hearing.

The best chance of avoiding such a catastrophe as a positive quarrel seemed to lie in postponing the formal meetings of the Congress till preliminary discussions had to some extent removed the most formidable of the difficulties which had thus arisen. The views which our Cabinet entertained are briefly stated in the following letter from Lord Liverpool, in which, while he inculcates on his correspondent the desirableness of peace at any price, save that of honour, he nevertheless does not conceal his fear that it may turn out that war can only be postponed, and not entirely averted.

*Most secret and confidential.*

Fife House, September 25th, 1814.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

We received yesterday your letters of the 5th and 11th inst. I can assure you that we are fully sensible of all the difficulties in which you have been involved, and entirely concur with you on the substantial points for which you have been contending.

We were certainly apprehensive that the course the negotiations were taking with Russia might unintentionally lead us further than we had any idea of going, and eventually produce a renewal of the war in Europe. It may be quite true that, if the Emperor of Russia does not relax in his present demands, the peace of Europe may not be of long continuance; but for however short a time that peace may last, I should consider it of great advantage.

In the course of two or three years it may reasonably be expected that the King's power in France will be consolidated, and that the revolutionary spirit, which still exists to such an alarming degree in that country, will in a great measure have evaporated; the people will have returned to peaceful habits, and the landed and monied interests will feel their fate connected with that of the restored Government. In two or three years, likewise, the Prince of Orange will, I trust, have been enabled firmly to establish his authority in the Low Countries; will have raised an army for the defence of his dominions, and have made some progress in erecting a barrier against his neighbours. But, if war should be renewed at present, I fear that we should lose all we have gained; that the revolutionary spirit would break forth again in full force, and the Continent would be plunged in all the evils under which it has groaned for the last twenty years.

A war now, therefore, may be a revolutionary war. A war some time hence, though an evil, need not be different in its character and its effects from any of those wars which occurred in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, before the commencement of the French Revolution. In short, this appears to me to be the precise period in which the sentiment of Cicero, so often quoted by Mr. Fox, is really in point: "*Iniquissimam pacem justissimo bello antefero.*"

I entertain these sentiments so strongly that, though I should most deeply regret the continuance of Murat on the throne of Naples as a sort of taint in our general arrangements ; and though I think therefore that all means should be used, consistent with our engagements, to negotiate him out of his present kingdom ; yet if such means should fail, as I fear they will, and the question should be whether any of the Powers of Europe should take up arms to drive him out of his dominions, my opinion would certainly be against such a measure. I think the positive benefit resulting from the success of it is not to be compared, under present circumstances, to the evils that might arise out of the attempt.

The reasoning in your last paper in answer to the Emperor of Russia is quite triumphant ; but I believe the truth to be, that he is committed to the Poles, and the dread of the re-integration of Poland as it existed in 1772 or 1791, and the effect of such a sacrifice of territory upon the Russian nobility and Russian people, are the only considerations that will induce him to give way ; he will be quite deaf to every appeal to justice, moderation, or to the engagements which he contracted with Prussia and Austria in the course of the last campaign.

We must likewise not conceal from ourselves that we shall have a hard battle to fight against public opinion, in defence of any arrangements of which the independence of Poland does not now form a part.

If the arrangements respecting the Duchy of Warsaw could have been quietly settled amongst the three Powers, as the result of the Treaty of Kalisch, and of that of the 9th of September, 1813, we should never have had any serious difficulty on the subject, and it would have been wholly unnecessary, and I think very imprudent, for us ever to have started the idea of Poland or of Polish independence ; but it becomes very different to defend the partition of the Duchy of Warsaw as one of the alternatives to Polish independence, when the question of Polish independence has been once brought forward. We must, however, do our best in this respect, fully satisfied that we have acted from no other motive than that which was likely to contribute most, upon the whole, to the peace and tranquillity of Europe.



It seems difficult to imagine what course this whole business is likely to take in Congress. I trust the means will exist, however, of protesting against what it may not be prudent to resist, or at least that care may be taken that we are not parties to transactions which we have such strong reasons, on every account, to disapprove.

I am, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

In carrying out these opinions of his colleagues, Lord Castlereagh, to his surprise and annoyance, found himself at first greatly impeded by the conduct of Talleyrand,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The following letter from Lord Castlereagh to Lord Liverpool relates a conversation which he had had with Talleyrand ; and the effect on that minister which it had, or seemed to have, produced :

" *Private.*

" Vienna, October 3d, 1814.

" MY DEAR LORD,

" My public letter will have put you *au fait* of the state of parties here : I wish I could send you a more satisfactory statement. However unpromising, we must not despair of getting it into some better form.

" I had a long interview with Prince Hardenberg this morning. He has made a communication of his views this day to Prince Metternich, which, though in certain points *exigeant*, may lead to an understanding and concert. The Austrian minister will have much to retrench.

" I afterwards paid a visit to Prince Talleyrand. I had a long interview with him, in which I took the liberty of representing to him, without reserve, the errors into which he appeared to me to have fallen since his arrival here, in conducting the views of his Court, if they had been correctly understood by me at Paris, when I was permitted to confer upon them with his Highness and the King of France. That I could not disguise from him that the general impression resulting from his demeanour had been to excite distrust and alarm with respect to the views of France ; and that the effect of this had been to deprive him of his just and natural influence for the purposes of moderating excessive pretensions, whilst it united all to preserve the general system. That instead of presenting himself here as disposed to cavil, to traverse, and to create a discontented party in Germany, he ought to have come to carry his own avowed objects (which I understood he had limited to Naples), and to moderate excessive pretensions from whatever quarter, but with a disposition to support the councils of the confederacy against anarchy and petty intrigue.

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who was at Vienna as the French plenipotentiary; and who, forgetting in some degree the position both of France

“That it was not for the Bourbons, who had been restored by the allies, to assume the tone of reprobating or throwing odium upon the arrangements which had kept the confederacy together: that it was impossible to suppose that, in conducting so great and complicated a cause to a successful issue, concessions to interested views were not, at moments, wise and requisite. That France having been delivered by this combination, and the legitimate family restored, both ought to regard the means which had been applied to this end in the spirit of favour and indulgence, and not endeavour to thwart it upon general reasoning, without any due consideration of the circumstances of the moment.”

“That in intimating his means of usefully moderating the arrangements in progress, it was a gratuitous sacrifice of influence to be opposing at once the favourite objects of all the respective Powers, instead of suffering the general sentiment to effect its first object of modifying, as far as possible, the extravagant pretensions of Russia on the side of Poland; in the event of succeeding in which it would then have been open for him, without complication or counteraction, to try either to moderate the demands of Prussia upon Saxony, or to urge the union of all the Powers in support of the Sicilian family; but that as his Highness had conducted it, he had sacrificed all useful influence, and united all against himself.

“I pressed upon his attention that, more especially with respect to success on the Neapolitan point, conciliation was his duty; that, so far from wishing to bring it to early decision, and upon a collateral point, his object should be (so long, at least, as the nature of the proceeding did not involve any concession of principle in favour of Murat) to keep it out of the way till the great Powers, assured of their own objects, felt themselves at liberty to take up such a question as this.

“Prince Talleyrand received with perfect good humour my remonstances, except so far as to justify his past intentions; but he did not combat my statement with respect to the future. On the contrary, he indicated a disposition to take the questions in the order I had stated, and seemed to admit that for any useful purpose the resistance ought not to be pushed beyond what certain of the allied Powers could support.

“I cannot answer for this explanation with the Prince de Talleyrand being a protection against the revival of inconvenient and fruitless controversy; but, I think it has given him more precise notions of the mode in which he may render service, if he be so disposed. The course his Highness adopted at the instant, and the impression pro-

and of Louis, adopted a higher tone than the allies in general were disposed to tolerate. On the claims of Russia, Lord Liverpool's own opinion was that, as we had from the very first partition of Poland kept ourselves clear of all interference in the affairs of that country, it would have been better if we could have continued to do so. But since, in the circumstances under which the Congress was assembling, that was impossible, our policy was clearly to endeavour to bring about such a settlement as should prevent Russia from having too preponderating an authority in the west of Europe. And with these views he drew up for Lord Castlereagh a short memorandum on the question, which to some extent might serve as his instructions :

*Private and confidential.*

Fife House, October 4th, 1814.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

The Prince Regent received some days ago a communication from Count Munster, in which he informs him that the Emperor of Russia did not desist from his views upon Poland, and that the King of Prussia was to be indemnified upon the North of Germany, and possibly with a part of Hanover. I have told the Prince that I am sure he might set his mind at ease as to the latter part of the communication, for that all the Powers at

duced, left me no alternative but to uphold decisively the authority of the alliance, which had advanced us to our present position. Whilst this conduct was tempered with every endeavour to conciliate France, it may, I trust, induce Prince Talleyrand to direct his exertions rather to modify our course than to speculate either upon disuniting or overpowering us, if such can have been his object, which I hardly believe to have been the case.

"I left him in a temper apparently to be of use, but I have lived now long enough with my foreign colleagues not to rely very implicitly upon any appearances.

" Believe me, my dear Lord,

" Most sincerely yours,

" CASTLEREAGH."

To LORD LIVERPOOL.

the Congress would be disposed to protect him against any such pretensions.

The intelligence respecting the views of the Emperor of Russia as to Poland is confirmed by your private letter, and by accounts we have received from Lord Walpole at Petersburg. However this question of Poland may now end, it cannot be settled either creditably or satisfactorily. The Emperor of Russia need never have stirred it, and in that case the Powers of Europe would have left the three states most interested to settle the question *à l'aimable* amongst themselves; but, as it has been once mooted, it becomes a question of serious embarrassment, and it is very material that we should lose no character by the part we take in it.

I am inclined to think that the less we have to do with it, except as far as regards giving an opinion, the better. I have sent you a short memorandum on the subject, containing the ideas which have occurred to me upon it. They very much correspond with what passed at a meeting at your house before you left England; but the train of reasoning is drawn out with more precision than occurred to me at that time, and the idea of the Duchy of Warsaw being preserved as an independent state under an independent sovereign I think it may be important to put forward for the reasons given in the memorandum.

It is impossible to know how far you may have advanced in this and other subjects before you receive this letter, but at all events the memorandum can do no harm, and you will make such use of the contents of it as you may judge upon the whole most advisable.

The French Government are not using us well on the subject of the Slave-trade. No step whatever has been taken for carrying into effect their promise to abolish the trade north of the Line. The expedition has sailed to take possession of the French factories on the coast of Africa, and, if some measures are not adopted to prevent the renewal of the trade within the agreed limits, speculations will be entered into for that purpose, and we shall have an amazing clamour to encounter from all the Abolitionists. Nothing can be more unsatisfactory than Jaucour's last communication to the Duke of Wellington on this subject. I hope you will be able to bring Talleyrand to

some point upon it. By accounts we have received from St. Domingo it appears that Petion is as determined upon resistance as Christophe, and there is no person acquainted with the island who thinks the French have the least chance of establishing their authority there.

I am, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

*Memorandum enclosed in the preceding letter.*

There can be no doubt that the restoration of the Kingdom of Poland, such as it was in the year 1792, under an hereditary, independent, and limited monarchy, would be the measure most just in itself and most satisfactory to the people of this country.

Have we any right, however, to call upon Russia, Austria, and Prussia to give up those provinces of Poland which they annexed to their own dominions, and which continue to form a part of them? Certainly not. We may recommend it, but we can do no more.

For, however unjust the partition of Poland may have been, if from considerations of prudence we either found it impracticable, or did not deem it expedient, to oppose them at the time they were made, we can have no right at the distance of five, ten, or twenty years, to require of the above-named Powers to dismember the provinces which they had then annexed, and which formed part of their dominions during a period in which we were at peace with all of them, and in alliance with some of them.

The only portion, therefore, of ancient Poland about whose fate we have now a right to take a decisive part is the Duchy of Warsaw. The fate of that duchy is *sub judice*.

It is obvious that an arrangement may be made with respect to the Duchy of Warsaw upon either of the three following principles.

- 1st. It may be divided between the three great Powers, and so made to constitute a part of each of their dominions.
- 2dly. It may be preserved as an independent state under an independent prince.
- 3dly. It may be assigned to one of the three great Powers as an

independent state, which under the present circumstances would be Russia.

Of these three alternatives I should certainly consider the third the worst for the general interests of Europe.

The second would preserve the principle of Polish independence, and might lead the inhabitants of the dismembered provinces to look to their reunion at some period more or less remote with the Duchy of Warsaw, but the weakness of the Power itself would in this case afford a reasonable security to the neighbouring Powers against the accomplishment of any such object ; and at all events the three Powers would be upon an equal footing, and have a common interest in opposing any measure which was likely to produce such an effect.

But if the Duchy of Warsaw is to be an independent state under the Emperor of Russia, the independent principle will not only be preserved, but it will be preserved under a monarch whose power will be sufficient to give encouragement to the disaffected in the Austrian and Prussian Polish provinces, to seize the first opportunity of resisting their acknowledged sovereign, and of re-uniting themselves under a head whom they will consider as strong enough to protect them, and who will be the sovereign of a country which they will regard as the parent stock of Polish independence.

I cannot, however, conceal from you that this last project would be less unpopular in this country than the measure of complete partition, and consequently of Polish annihilation.

If we are to come to either of these alternatives, I think it would be very desirable that there should, if possible, be some record of our having expressed our opinion how desirable it would be to restore Poland on the principle of 1792, and of our having made some effort for that which we are more entitled to ask, the independence of the Duchy of Warsaw under a neutral sovereign.

I feel it of so much importance as to this and every other question being settled at the Congress by the three allies and ourselves upon a principle of cordiality and good humour, that I would sacrifice a great deal here for the attainment of so important an object ; but if the extravagant and unreasonable views of Russia render this impracticable, and that the question, however settled,

must become a matter of contest, I think we ought to secure to ourselves in that case the advantage of having some record of the principle on which we should have been desirous of making the Polish arrangements, and at the same time that we should decline if possible to be direct parties to an arrangement which is at variance with the principles we have set forth, though the interests may not be of that nature to induce us to wish the renewal of all the evils of war to Europe in support of our opinion or our wishes.

The judgment and wishes here expressed, with which Lord Castlereagh's own opinions entirely coincided, were maintained by him with a firmness which seemed wholly to disregard the offence which might be taken at his attitude, united with an address and temper that prevented any one from complaining as having been offended, unless he were prepared to avow that any difference of opinion was in itself offensive to him. His greatest difficulty was to bring those with whom he was called on to discuss these matters to the point. As he wrote in military metaphor to Lord Liverpool on the 20th of October, "The great armies were manœuvring without firing a shot. As yet he had no progress to report; nor could he give him any insight either as to the turn things were likely to take, or the time that the plenipotentiaries would be kept at Vienna. He was a little out of patience at this waste of time." And as a step towards bringing at least one of the most important questions to a decision, he drew up an elaborate examination of the whole of the Czar's project, which he laid before him, enforcing with the most cogent logic every argument which might have been expected to induce Alexander to abate his demands; though not without expressing the most flattering estimation of his claims to consideration from all the allies, and appealing to the former conduct of the British Cabinet for proofs that its policy was not now likely to be "adverse to the views and interests of Russia." At the same time he ventured

to remind his Imperial Majesty that the project on which he was now commenting was "the fourth instance of Russian aggrandizement within a few years;" and this fact was a fair ground on which to urge upon him that he could afford to "set to Europe an example of generosity and moderation. Lord Castlereagh did not hesitate to declare his solemn conviction that it depended exclusively on the temper in which his Imperial Majesty should meet the questions which more immediately concerned his own empire, "whether the present Congress should prove a blessing to mankind, or should only exhibit a scene of discordant intrigue and a lawless scramble for power.... It would," he added, "be a deep mortification to himself to see his Majesty for the first time regarded, even by those whom he had delivered, as an object of alarm instead of confidence. And he conjured his Majesty by the freedom to which Alexander had condescended to admit him, to rise superior to all minor considerations, and to give to Europe that peace which they expected at his hands. The development of his own and the Cabinet's ideas on the subject he reserved for another time, after his Majesty should have given a fair consideration to the principle which he was advocating." But he did not consider himself precluded from at once intimating the conviction of all the allies and all Europe that they had a right to claim from him, "for the sake of peace, a gradual amelioration of the frame of his Polish administration. He himself was confident that such arrangements on this point, as they desired, were easily practicable; and that the question of his frontier might be settled so as to leave him still in possession of the greater part of the Duchy of Warsaw, while his allies would obtain that species of frontier which no independent Power can forego, either with dignity or with safety."

In one point, and in one only, Alexander resembled his British correspondent; he looked beyond the courteous



and deferential language of the letter at the manifest intention of the writer, and, seeing in that only a resolute opposition to his will, he was too much out of humour to attempt to conceal his feelings; but at once applied himself to the task of drawing up an answer which he designed to display his full sense of his own dignity and power. His feelings, or at least his public display of them, were faithfully reported to Lord Liverpool by Lord Castlereagh's private secretary, Mr. Cooke, a keen and shrewd observer, to whom his principal entrusted the task of reporting to the minister the lighter gossip of the capital, which at such a time is rarely without its political significance, while he reserved himself for the report of the heavier business.

*Most confidential.*

Vienna, 20th October, 1814.

MY DEAR LORD,

You will see by Lord Castlereagh's letters that we are still in the dark, and do not advance. Affairs stick with Metternich, who, I believe, will never play a great straightforward game but by mere necessity, and when he finds that all little and side games fail.

In the meantime the Emperor of Russia fancies that he can manage by address his imperial and royal colleagues. He flirts, and plays the amiable from morning till night, and flatters himself with complete success by his cajoleries.

There have been fine displays of sentiment. The Emperor of Russia has been appointed to the command of the regiment of Hiller, which he placed himself at the head of the other day in the Prater, and there was an affecting scene between him and the Emperor of Austria. The King of Prussia has another Austrian regiment, and we have prints in the shops of the three Sovereigns, and under them "The Sacred League." All this nonsense tells. To-morrow, or the day after, all the Courts set off for Basle, and will be absent five or six days, so there will be little time after their return to arrange for the first of November, if there is to be an arrangement.

In the meantime the fêtes go on at an immense expense. The

review in the Prater of near 20,000 men, and the dinner of the Courts and whole army was really imposing and grand. Metternich's ball in the evening was equally superb. I understand Stadion, who is at the head of the finance, begins to complain loudly of the expense, and that it is too much for him in addition to 30,000 men in arms. The Emperor of Austria also is almost worn out.

Talleyrand wants to make an explosion, and, if Lord Castlereagh does not, I think he will. I have tried to force Metternich to act by goading his employes, who all profess to be of our sentiments, and eager to forward them, but they do not speak with confidence as to their principal. They see the game, that on one hand Poland and Saxony must both be surrendered, on the other Saxony only ; on the one hand Saxony and their frontier lost, on the other Saxony lost, but their frontier saved ; on the one hand Prussia made a vassal of Russia, and Austria thrown for self-defence into the arms of France ; on the other Prussia and Austria combined for the protection of Germany, and the independence of Europe, against Russia and France, if she should join Russia, which at present seems impossible.

In the meantime Bavaria wishes to act with Austria in order to form her arrondissement, and from jealousy of Wirtemberg. The latter is said to be Russian, and the Crown Prince's views on the Archduchess of Oldenburgh<sup>1</sup> are said to be still favoured, but I do not learn that anything on that point is settled.

In this state you may naturally believe that Lord Castlereagh is rather fidgety. I begin to think it may be best for Europe that nothing should be done before the first of November, and that a broad statement should be made that nothing would be brought forward because Russia would not declare that she was bound by her treaties. Of course this will be avoided if possible.

All this is to yourself alone, so you will burn my letter.

Ever most truly your Lordship's servant,

E. COOKE.

<sup>1</sup> The Archduchess of Oldenburg was Alexander's sister.

*Most private.*

Vienna, October 25th, 1814.

MY DEAR LORD,

I yet am almost quite benighted. They say Czartoriski with assistance is preparing an answer to Lord Castlereagh's papers, at which I rejoice, for if once the Emperor of Russia can be brought to a *guerre de plume* I think matters may be brought to bear. In the mean time Talleyrand wants to enter a *caveat* on Saxony, and he has drawn a *drolerie* on the law of nations in order to save Saxony and destroy Murat at one stroke. I was desired by Lord Castlereagh to request he would not give in his note till he had seen his Lordship, and when I left him he assented. He seems miserable that any system should be found for defending the North of Germany against Russia without the march of French armies beyond the Rhine; and he said France was more ready for war than any country in Europe. He is *acharné* against Prussia, cannot bear an alliance with Austria, or tolerate the idea that Austria and Prussia should be able to defend the North of Germany.

I think, if the Emperor can be brought to book on the point of Poland, Prussia will not object to preserve Saxony in part, and so things may go on, but this is all in the clouds. In the mean time Prussia and Austria are getting closer.

Talleyrand's principle is this: There is no judge of sovereigns; sovereigns always retain their rights till they cede them; all dispossession without a cession is illegal.

I asked where he found this new theory, for I never had found it in any author. He said in the history of the last three centuries. I agreed with the fact that all dispossessed sovereigns had made acts of cession because they received compensation, but I never could understand that the act of cession made the droit, however it might be in *actus expletorius juris*, and it was an odd principle to make the consent of a criminal the foundation of the right to punish him.

I am not sure whether delay and a new adjournment will not be the happiest measure, though one must wish for Europe to speak out. I am sure you must feel for Lord Castlereagh. As for the Emperor of Russia, he dances while Rome is burning. He plays the lion after hunting, dividing the prey: "I take one

part to give me the keys of Berlin ; I take the second to give me the keys of Vienna, and I claim the third for the *beau moral*." If I tried to write seriously I should only confuse your Lordship. We must wait the first of November.

Ever most truly your Lordship's servant,  
E. COOKE.

*P.S.* There is an assembly here. I have fled from the heat. Pozzo di Borgo talked to me in mournful tone. He says the Emperor is quite wicked. He abused Metternich yesterday, and was very violent. He has affronted many of his generals by giving the regiments to colonels and giving them nothing in their place. He has abused Nesselrode.<sup>1</sup> The King of Prussia has promised to do nothing in the journey which can damage the plans adopted. When he finds Prussia fall off he will be furious.

These letters, and especially the last, give a fair idea of a few of the difficulties with which Lord Castlereagh and the ministers at home had to contend. The only point in his favour seemed to be that, in resisting the desire of Prussia to appropriate the whole of Saxony, he was likely to have the assistance of Talleyrand. And the principle which the wily Frenchman laid down as the rule of his conduct, that no defeat of a sovereign could justify those who had vanquished him in dispossessing him of territories which he did not voluntarily cede, was very artfully conceived, as commending itself to all weak princes as their chief protection, while the events of the late war were quite sufficient to show that circumstances might occasionally arise to make even powerful monarchs glad to appeal to it.

A few days afterwards, and before the Congress opened, Lord Castlereagh received the letter which Mr. Cooke mentions that Alexander and his favourite, Czartoriski, were preparing in reply to his argument on the subject of Poland. It was meant to be argumentative, but it really

<sup>1</sup> Nesselrode was Alexander's chief minister.

showed nothing but the imperial writer's exceeding indignation at being thwarted in his purpose, and his ill-temper with those who opposed him. It was boastful and arrogant in the highest degree, claiming for himself the entire credit for the deliverance of Europe from Napoleon. And even while admitting, what it was impossible to deny, the cordiality of the assistance which he had received from England, Alexander tried to turn the services which she had formerly done him into an argument against her now, by reproachfully contrasting them with her present resistance to his supreme pleasure. Those services before the renewal of the war between France and Russia, during the war and since the war, had been incessant and most important. It had been through the influence of England that the peace had been concluded between Russia and Turkey, which had proved the salvation of the former empire by enabling Alexander to concentrate the entire strength of the nation against the French invader. And, since the repulse of that invasion, it had not been without the countenance and cordial sanction of England that she had made the long-coveted acquisition of Finland. These benefits he could not deny ; but there was something almost amusing in the inference which he drew from them : that the least hesitation to gratify him further with additions to his territory, which were not very exorbitant in themselves, but full of menace and danger to his neighbours, was a renunciation of that friendly disposition from which he had hitherto gained so much. He dwelt upon the purity of his intentions, on the greatness of his sacrifices, though he had not only not yielded up one inch of territory of which Napoleon's retreat had given him the occupation, but was actually pressing his own peculiar friend, the King of Prussia, to make him further cessions. And he still spoke of his own "determination on the subject of the Duchy of Warsaw" as one that he could not change, and to which the allies had no alternative but to submit ; closing his letter with what he evidently intended to be felt as a

dignified reproof, "that it was only his feeling of the propriety of Lord Castlereagh's motives which had softened the impression which the reading of his letter had raised in his mind."

In the end the matter was, to a certain extent, compromised. Alexander obtained the greater part of the grand duchy for which he was so anxious ; but he received it with the obligation not to incorporate it with his own empire, but to form his Polish territories into a separate kingdom, which should preserve its own civil and religious institutions. This settlement, however, was owing to other circumstances rather than to the continuance of our exertions on the subject ; for the Congress had scarcely opened when Lord Castlereagh received instructions from Lord Liverpool to withdraw as far as possible from the discussion relating to Poland, as one in which we had but a secondary interest, though this cessation of opposition to Alexander was so far from having its origin in any belief in the sincerity of his professions of gratitude and good will to us, that Lord Liverpool suspected him on good grounds of being, at this time, inclined to take the part of our enemies in the United States. The difficulties with which our contest in that quarter encumbered our diplomacy in Europe, and embarrassed the Ministry at home, are also explained in the same letter ; and they only increase the credit to which England is entitled for the exertions which, in spite of them, she made, and the power which she put forth, in the following year :

Fife House, October 28th, 1814.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

I send you enclosed a memorandum of Vansittart's on reading your despatches of the 14th inst.

I think his paper contains very much the impression of several of our other colleagues, viz. : that we have done enough on this subject of Poland, and that, if our efforts should not have been successful, the time is now come when, according to one of your former despatches, it would be far better that we should

withdraw ourselves from the question altogether, and reserve ourselves for points on which we have a more immediate and direct interest.

I am the more strongly inclined to this opinion because I am fully persuaded, as I have already said, that no arrangement respecting Poland can now be either creditable or satisfactory.

I think it very material that we should likewise consider that our war with America will probably now be of some duration. We owe it therefore to ourselves not to make enemies in other quarters if we can avoid it, for I cannot but feel apprehensive that some of our European allies will not be indisposed to favour the Americans, and if the Emperor of Russia should be desirous of taking up their cause, we are well aware from some of Lord Walpole's<sup>1</sup> late communications that there is a most powerful party in Russia to support him. We shall be happy to hear that you have been able to keep clear of any engagement with Russia as to the Dutch debt. Looking to a continuance of the American war our financial state is far from satisfactory. Without taking into the account any compensation to foreign Powers on the subject of the Slave-trade, we shall want a loan for the service of the ensuing year of 27,000,000*l.* or 28,000,000*l.*

The American war will not cost us less than 10,000,000*l.* in addition to our peace establishment, and other expenses. We must expect therefore to hear it said that the property tax is continued for the purpose of securing a better frontier for Canada.

Your note to Talleyrand on the subject of the Slave-trade is perfectly satisfactory, and will place us on excellent ground as to that question.

Yours, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

*Memorandum by Mr. Vansittart enclosed in the preceding letter.*

I begin to apprehend that we are making ourselves too much *principals* in the disputes respecting Poland. The pretensions of Russia evidently endanger the security and independence of Austria and Prussia; but those Powers are at least wavering in their resistance, if not disposed to acquiesce for the sake of securing objects still more interesting to them. We run the

<sup>1</sup> The British Ambassador at St. Petersburg.

risk, therefore, of being disavowed, and represented *abroad* as actuated by a jealousy of the greatness of Russia, and *at home* as the advocates and instigators of a system of partition. I cannot look without apprehension at the means by which (if at all) the views of Russia can be counteracted. I can see no other than by bringing forward France as a leading Power either in war or negotiation, and re-establishing her influence in the centre of Europe, which it has cost us so much to overturn. After all, we can have no security against some treacherous compromise between France and Russia, and there is even a great probability that, in resentment of our interference, the Emperor of Russia may be disposed to listen to some suggestion for bringing forward questions of maritime law at the Congress.

With respect to the Polish question itself, I cannot help thinking there is some weight in the Emperor's observation to Lord Castlereagh, "that Russia would gain more power by acquiring half the Duchy of Warsaw as a *province*, than the whole as a kingdom." The Emperor, in accepting the crown of Poland, becomes bound to give the kingdom a *constitution*, and whether he restores the constitution of 1790, or the old one, or frames a new one, he will infallibly cripple the powers of his Government, and render the Poles much less manageable than when directly subjects of Russia. There is besides the greatest probability that, in the course of one or two generations at the utmost, the nominal independence of Poland would become real. A minority or a weak reign in Russia would bring about a separation, which all the other Powers in Europe would be inclined to countenance.

In the meantime, as far as British interests are concerned, I think the decision of the question of no great *political* importance to us either way; and that, in a commercial point of view, we should reap considerable advantage even from a nominal independence of Poland. Russia, from whatever cause, shows the strongest spirit of hostility against our trade, and nothing could so effectually defeat her restrictive regulations as the opening the ports of an adjoining kingdom, in which, even if similar prohibitions were nominally imposed, they would be constantly evaded. It is indeed well known that, previously to the final



partition of Poland, large quantities of British goods prohibited in Russia always found their way there through the Polish ports, and the same thing, I am told, in a degree, takes place at present in the uncertainty of the final settlement.

These ideas occurred to me upon reading the conversations of the Emperor of Russia with Lord Castlereagh and Lord Stewart, and they lead me to this practical conclusion : that though we were bound to support to a certain extent the endeavours of Austria and Prussia to prevent the extension of a dominion dangerous to their independence, yet we have now fully performed all that could be expected from us, and that we ought to avoid irritating Russia by a pertinacious opposition which is so unlikely to be successful.

Another letter, written a week later, throws further light on the embarrassments in which our financial necessities had involved the Administration ; and which, though under the fresh pressure of the extraordinary events of the following spring they were put aside for a moment, came on it subsequently with augmented perplexity ; while other anxieties were also weighing on it from the agitated state of France, where the restoration of the old dynasty, under circumstances which gave it the appearance of being forced on the country by her victorious enemies ; the ignorance or disregard of the general feeling displayed by Louis and his ministers ; the disbanding and consequent discontent of a great portion of the army ; and the distress of all classes, were producing an universal dissatisfaction which seemed to threaten dangerous commotions, if not fresh revolution :

*Private and confidential.*

Fife House, November 2d, 1814.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

I have received your private letter of the 20th. I am sorry to find your progress is very slow, for I fear it will be quite impossible to adjourn Parliament beyond the end of January, or the very beginning of February. We could not have made a loan before Christmas without the greatest possible inconvenience. We have given to the contractors the usual assurance that we most probably should not make another loan in the

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course of the year 1814. This sort of assurance does not expose Government to much difficulty; if the loan is at a premium, and has been a profitable concern for them, we can always make reasonable conditions with the present contractors; but if the loan is at a discount, as is the case at present, it puts you entirely in their hands. We shall therefore feel it necessary at present to confine ourselves to voting the annual duties and a part of the war taxes.

Besides the difficulties as to money, the Bank Restriction Bill expires on the 28th of March, and the property tax on the 5th of April. Both these measures will occasion serious contests in Parliament, and we should fight them to great disadvantage if we put off the period of the meeting of Parliament so late as not to give the two Houses time for a fair and full discussion of them.

I should hope, however, that you will soon be able to make some way in the negotiations. The first point on these occasions, if not the greatest difficulty, always takes more time in settling than any other. In this case it is the principal and most complicated difficulty, not only from its own importance, but in consequence of the variety of interests which must be decided with reference to it. The subject, in point of argument, has however been nearly, if not entirely, exhausted; and we must come to some decision upon it. We shall, above all things, I hope, avoid a renewal of the war.

You will have heard from many quarters of the combustible state of the interior of France, and the expectation which exists of some explosion. If the war under such circumstances was to be renewed, there is no saying where it would end. It would very probably plunge Europe again in all the horrors from which we have had the credit of extricating it. Between such an evil and any arrangement more or less good for Poland, Saxony, or Italy, I should not hesitate. I do not say that I would not give my opinion fairly as to what was best, but, having given it, I would certainly recommend compromise to avoid a rupture.

I see little prospect of our negotiations at Ghent<sup>1</sup> ending in

<sup>1</sup> Between our Commissioners and those of the United States, with a view to pacification.

peace, and I am apprehensive that they may be brought to a conclusion under circumstances which will render it necessary to lay the papers before Parliament and to call for a vote upon them previous to the Christmas recess; of this, however, I shall probably be able to speak more positively some days hence.

The continuance of the American war will entail upon us a prodigious expense, much more than we had any idea of; and I cannot therefore avoid pressing upon you the importance of not entailing upon us any part of the Russian debt to Holland if you can avoid it. Consider only what this charge will be in addition to our war expenditure and to our pecuniary obligations to Holland and Sweden. It would be in principle one of the most difficult questions to defend that ever was brought forward in Parliament. If we had been at peace with all the world, and the arrangements to be made at Vienna were likely to contain anything very gratifying to the feelings of this country, we might have met the question with some degree of confidence; but, as matters now stand, everything that is really valuable will be considered as having been gained before, and we shall be asked whether we can really meet such a charge in addition to all the burthens which the American war will bring upon us.

I recommend these considerations to your most anxious attention.

All our colleagues are coming to town, and we are to have a Cabinet on the speech to-morrow. Many of them have not yet seen the American correspondence, but we have got the question into that state that the Government is not absolutely committed; and there will be an opportunity therefore of reviewing in a full Cabinet the whole course of our policy as to America.

I regret particularly that we cannot have the advantage, on this subject, of your assistance.

Yours, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

Lord Castlereagh's answer shows his opinion of the Czar's character, and of the best way of dealing with him. But, as has been already intimated, the partial adoption of

our views with respect to Poland, which was the result of the negotiations at Vienna, was owing chiefly to the necessity for an instant conclusion of all discussions on such subjects, that was imposed on all parties by the return of Napoleon from Elba, an event which made every other matter of secondary importance in comparison with the organization of a combined resistance to his recovered power :

*Private.*

Vienna, November, 1814.

MY DEAR LIVERPOOL,

As Cooke sends you the anecdotes of the day, "pour servir à l'histoire," I shall not encroach on his province. You may be assured his Imperial Majesty does not rise in our estimation, either as a man, or as a politician ; and you must make up your mind to watch him, and to resist him if necessary as another Buonaparte. You may rely upon it, my friend *Van's* philosophy is untrue as applied to him ; acquiescence will not keep him back, nor will opposition accelerate his march. His Imperial Majesty is never more condescending than to those who speak plainly but respectfully to him ; and if I were to speculate upon the course most likely to save your money, and to give you the longest interval of peace with such a character, I should say that it would lie in never suffering him for a moment to doubt your readiness to support the continental Powers against his ambitious encroachments. I am not the least afraid of his stirring maritime questions here ; other Powers will first experience the effects of his character, and our best chance of keeping the danger at a distance will be to make him understand that we do not mean to desert them. There is no sort of reason to apprehend their being indiscreetly prone to resistance. In suffering them to fall within the vortex of his influence, we shall only bring the struggle upon points of vital consequence, which we cannot yield with an accumulated and perhaps accelerated pressure. With such a personage at the head of between forty and fifty millions of people prone to, and adapted to war, you cannot afford to dissolve your continental relations, unless you are prepared to acquiesce in a domination that would very soon

assume the character of that from which we have escaped, and would certainly not degenerate from it in a disposition to circumscribe the power of Great Britain.

The events in America are unfortunate, as tending powerfully to protract that war. It makes little sensation here. I have found no inquisitiveness upon the nature of the negotiations at Ghent.

Ever yours, my dear Lord, most sincerely,

CASTLEREAGH.

On the subject of Saxony we were more successful ; though, except as an admission of the King of Prussia's demands would have furnished a dangerous precedent for dispossessing a sovereign of all his dominions as a punishment for exercising his unquestioned prerogative of choosing his side in war, it was not a matter in which our Ministry conceived this country to have a greater interest than she had in the affairs of Poland ; still, chiefly in consequence of our intercession, which was put solely on the ground of mercy and not of right,<sup>1</sup> the King of Saxony was left in possession of the greater part of his dominions, though he was compelled to cede a large territory beyond the Elbe to the King of Prussia.

<sup>1</sup> In a letter from Lord Castlereagh to the Duke of Wellington, enclosing a memorandum which he had drawn up to be shown by the duke to the French ministers, he lays it down positively, that "The King of Saxony has no right to indemnity or to restoration ; he may have a claim on the lenity of his conquerors."

## CHAPTER XVII.

Reports of a plan to assassinate the Duke of Wellington—Lord Liverpool proposes to him to take the command in America—Negotiations at Ghent—Lord Liverpool's instructions to Mr. Goulburn—Arrogance of the Americans—The Treaty of Ghent—The Czar's claim to the Duchy of Warsaw—Disapproval of our ministers—The Prussians seize on Saxony—Apparent danger of war—Lord Liverpool's instructions to Lord Castlereagh—His willingness to unite with France—Lord Liverpool's opinion on Italy—Animosity of the Opposition in England, and excited state of the country—Conduct of the Czar at Vienna—News of the Treaty of Ghent arrives at Vienna—Proposals to remove Murat from Naples—The Duke of Wellington's opinion in favour of it—Lord Liverpool's doubts—Talleyrand's suggestion—Lord Liverpool's final view on this subject—Murat's treachery.

MEANWHILE every day fresh intelligence from France rendered Lord Liverpool more and more anxious about the state of affairs in that country. He even became uneasy about the personal safety of the Ambassador himself, for he had received information from persons professing to speak from certain knowledge, that a plan had been laid to assassinate the Duke; and, under the influence of this apprehension, he proposed to remove him from Paris, either sending him to join Lord Castlereagh at Vienna, so that he, as a military man, with all the weight belonging to his unequalled reputation, might take a part in the discussions "on the subject of the frontier of the Netherlands connected with that of Prussia, Bavaria, and the German Powers," or appointing him to the chief command of North America, "with full powers to make peace or to continue

the war, if peace should be found impracticable, with renewed vigour."

He left the choice of the two employments to the Duke himself, but so little did he doubt that he would concur in the propriety of his immediate departure from France that the same day he wrote him a second letter embodying such portions of the intelligence which he had received as concerned King Louis himself; with a recommendation of some measures of precaution which he thought calculated to disconcert or baffle the plots which he believed to be in agitation.<sup>1</sup>

*Most secret and confidential.*

Fife House, November 4th, 1814.

MY DEAR DUKE,

It is most probable that you may not have an opportunity of making any communication of importance to the King before you leave Paris.

I will, however, take my chance of such an opportunity occurring; and, if it should not, you may leave this letter with Lord Fitzroy Somerset, in order that he may make use of the opinions contained in it, if the King of France, Monsieur de Blacas, or any other person in the King's personal confidence should afford him an opportunity of conversing upon the subject.

Independent of any recent information, there can be no doubt that a convulsion in Paris, or at least an attempt to create one, is not at all unlikely, considering the number of desperate characters disaffected to the Government, or out of employment, who must be at present in the capital.

I think it very desirable, therefore, that the attention of the royal family should be called to the following precautionary measures. If due regard is paid to them they may prevent the blow being struck at all, or if it is struck they may limit the evil effects of it.

<sup>1</sup> Some of the intelligence which disturbed Lord Liverpool had been forwarded by the Duke himself (though not that respecting the plots against himself). He had no doubt of the reality of the existence of some dangerous plots; though he doubted whether the plotters were as certain to proceed to instant action as his informants believed.

The first measure of precaution to which I would call their attention is never to allow a reunion of the whole royal family in Paris at any one time.

Whatever rash act a few desperate men may be prepared to perform, the purpose never would be fully answered except by seizing the whole royal family at once. I do not know that there is any one of them against whom there exists particular or personal resentment; and the King, I should imagine, would in this respect be more safe than any other member of the family. The object, therefore, in seizing or destroying him, is to seize and destroy the dynasty, and the safety of any member of the dynasty must contribute to the safety of the whole.

The next measure of precaution I would suggest I took the liberty of mentioning to the King of France on board the yacht the day he sailed for Dover. Let the south of France never be without a prince. The south of France, with perhaps the exception of La Vendée, is the only part of the country in which there appears to be any sentiment of loyalty.

From all accounts, there exists throughout the southern provinces a great degree of enthusiasm for the throne of Bourbon. This spirit and sentiment should be kept alive by the continual presence of one of the royal family. If any convulsion should arise at Paris, we should be prepared to raise the royal standard at once.

It is my intention secretly to collect 50,000 stand of arms, which shall be ready to be transported at the shortest notice, if circumstances should make the demand for them necessary.

If these precautionary measures are attended to, I am persuaded the Bourbons may keep their hold of the country, even though a personal calamity should happen to any one of them.

Yours, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

*To the DUKE OF WELLINGTON.*

On the frontier to be proposed for the new kingdom of the Netherlands he had written his opinion to the Duke at some length a day or two before, in a letter which clearly shows that his indisposition to give up all Saxony to Prussia arose from no want of friendship to the last-



mentioned power, which, on the contrary, he was inclined to strengthen by the donation of so important a frontier-town as Mayence, but that his views were directed by the general principle of avoiding dangerous precedents, and still more by an anxiety that the different arrangements which should now be made should be of a permanent character, and should at least contain in themselves no seeds of future disagreement.

MY DEAR DUKE,

Fife House, November 1st, 1814.

I have read and considered your letters attentively on the subject of the frontier to the Netherlands, and, as far as I am capable of forming any opinion upon such a subject, it entirely concurs with yours.

I certainly think that it is essential to the security of the Low Countries, and I may say of the rest of Europe against France, that some considerable military power should be brought into contact with her. I always preferred the idea of restoring the Low Countries to Austria on this very account, to the annexation to Holland. But this was rendered impracticable from circumstances, and we have no way therefore of affording adequate security to Holland, the Low Countries, and the North of Europe, than by bringing Prussia, in some way or other, into contact with France on that side.

I think the best arrangement would be therefore, that Prussia should have Luxembourg, and the Prince of the Netherlands have Liège and Juliers.

If the question should arise as to Luxembourg between the sovereign of the Netherlands and the King of Bavaria, I should have no hesitation in preferring the former. They might neither of them have adequate military means (considering the other calls upon them) for the defence of the place, but the sovereign of the Netherlands would certainly have every disposition to defend it, and would use every effort in his power for this purpose, whereas the King of Bavaria might be so circumstanced, as to feel it for his interest to sacrifice Luxembourg for the purpose of securing advantages elsewhere. The worst arrangement of all, I think, would be anything like a confederation garrison.

Projects of this sort may do very well for a little while, but in a certain time it is found out that *what is everybody's is nobody's*. No Power has a sufficient interest for preserving the place. The fortifications are neglected, perhaps ultimately dismantled, and, even if this should not be the case, the nature both of the garrison and the command must give great facilities to the enemy who attacks it.

I concur with you that it would be very desirable to give Mayence to Prussia, but I am apprehensive that neither Austria nor France will agree to it. In that case it would be better that Bavaria should have Mayence than Luxembourg; it is more contiguous to the King of Bavaria's other dominions, and the German Powers would feel a much deeper interest in supporting the King of Bavaria, with a view of keeping Mayence out of the hands of France, than they would for keeping Luxembourg out of the same hands.

Would you have the goodness to forward this letter, or a copy of it, to Lord Castlereagh by the messenger on Friday?

Yours, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

*To the DUKE OF WELLINGTON.*

His reasons for desiring that America should be the duke's choice he explained more fully the same day to Lord Castlereagh.

*Most secret and confidential.*

Fife House, November 4th, 1814.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

I send you a copy of a letter I have this day written to the Duke of Wellington, in consequence of communications which I have held with Lieutenant-General Macaulay, Hamilton, and Lord Harrowby.

Whether the information we have received is or is not exaggerated, the whole Cabinet is of opinion that we should not be justified in allowing the Duke of Wellington to incur the risk to which he might be exposed by his continuance at Paris at the present moment. Although the Duke of Wellington leaves the question entirely to our decision, he is evidently not

insensible to his own danger, particularly to the danger of his being detained as a hostage or prisoner, in the event of any internal convulsion in Paris.

The point of the Duke of Wellington's quitting Paris being decided, I confess I feel most anxious, under all the circumstances, that he should accept the command in America. There is no other person we can send there really equal to the situation except Lord Niddry.<sup>1</sup> Bathurst had a communication with him. He would be willing to go if his health and wounds would permit, but his surgeons give no hopes of his being able to undertake the service for some months, and they doubt if they would suffer him to go even then.

The Duke of Wellington would restore confidence to the army, place the military operations upon a proper footing, and give us the best chance of peace. I know he is very anxious for the restoration of peace with America, if it can be made on terms at all honorable. It is a material consideration likewise, that if we shall be disposed, for the sake of peace, to give up something of our just pretensions, we can do this more creditably through him than through any other person.

I wish very much we could have had a communication with you before we came to this decision, but from the nature of the case delay was impossible. It was quite essential to remove him from Paris, and it was not less so to decide on the ground on which that removal was to take place. Besides, if we are to have the advantages of his services in America, the sooner it is known and the sooner he can go the better. This appointment will in itself be sufficient to obviate many difficulties and much embarrassment at home.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

Not that Lord Liverpool desired that the Duke should go to America at once; negotiations were in progress which might possibly render his presence there superfluous, and in the middle of November he unfolded his notions on that subject to the Duke himself in a letter

<sup>1</sup> Formerly Sir J. Hope.

which displays a singularly accurate judgment of the importance of different parts of our operations, and especially of the warfare on the American or Canadian lakes, and of the chances for or against us in that quarter.

*Most secret and confidential.*

Fife House, November 13th, 1814.

MY DEAR DUKE,

I received at the same time your two letters of the 7th and 9th inst. and have communicated them to the Cabinet.

We are all as anxious as ever for your leaving Paris without delay, though we have not thought it right to give you an official order for that purpose.

We are not insensible to some advantages which might arise from your remaining there at present ; but we cannot allow ourselves on public grounds to place them even for a moment in comparison with the dangers to which you are exposed, if the information we have now received from so many quarters can be credited.

With respect to the ground for your removal, the court martial on Sir John Murray would, in our judgment, answer the object, as it cannot be instituted till the arrival of the officers who have been sent for from Spain, and they cannot be expected for five or six weeks.

The command in America would give general satisfaction here, and would appear at Paris sufficient to account for your not returning. It would not be necessary that you should leave this country for America immediately. Your departure might be deferred partly on account of the season, and partly on account of the state of the negotiation. If the negotiation should end satisfactorily the command will, of course, cease ; if, on the other hand, it should terminate unfavorably, your sailing might still be delayed till the months of February or March, and if the course of events should render your continuance in Europe at that time necessary, we should have sufficient ground for making some new arrangement as to the command in America.

Your appointment therefore to the command in America does not render your going there by any means necessary if it should

hereafter be judged inexpedient, but it is the best ground for getting you from Paris at this moment, and it may have an advantageous effect upon the negotiations at Ghent.

With respect to those negotiations we are waiting anxiously for the American project. We consider the question is quite open to us, and, without entering into particulars now, I believe I can assure you that we shall be disposed to meet your views upon the points on which the negotiation appears to turn at present.

Upon the question of the lakes in North America, we are fully aware of the importance of establishing a naval superiority upon them. Every effort is making for that purpose, but it is impossible to give any decided opinion as to the result, as it must depend upon the exertions which the enemy are capable of making, especially in building and equipping, and it must always be recollected that they are close to their resources, and we are at an immense distance from ours.

If I were to give an individual opinion on this subject, I should say that there were some of the lakes on which I think we ought to be able to acquire and maintain a decided superiority, and that there were others on which we could not expect to maintain that superiority permanently, even if it were possible to acquire it. For example, I should say that Lake Champlain<sup>1</sup> was so conveniently situated with respect to the United States, with the populous province of Vermont on one side and that of New York on the other, that the Americans ought to have the means even with ordinary exertions of increasing their force more rapidly than we could increase ours, considering the scanty resources of Canada, and the distance of Canada from Great Britain. On the other hand they have not the same advantages with respect to Lake Ontario, and it is understood that we can build larger ships at Kingston than they can build at Sackett's Harbour. If, therefore, our superiority was once decidedly established on this lake, I think we ought to be able to maintain it. You may depend, however, on every exertion

<sup>1</sup> The accuracy of Lord Liverpool's information, and the soundness of his judgment, are shown in a very eminent degree by these observations on the probable result of the warfare on the lakes. The Americans did establish their superiority on Lake Champlain, and we ours on Lake Ontario, just as he predicted.

being made in this branch of the service which is practicable, and no means would be withheld which you might think it important to propose for this purpose.

If after having considered, however, all that I have said about the command in America, you are still of opinion that it is not the best ground on which you can rest your departure from Paris, and any other reason should appear to you to have fewer inconveniences attending it, we have no objection to your availing yourself of that reason, whatever it may be. We only beg that you would let us know what it is, in order that we may be ready, immediately on your arrival, to assign it as the cause of your return to England.

I cannot however avoid again repeating that, whatever may be the ground which it may be proper to assign for your quitting Paris, we shall not feel easy till we hear of your having landed at Dover, or at all events of your being out of the French territory; and, in leaving the precise time and mode of departure to your discretion, we most earnestly entreat you to return to England with as little delay as possible.

The necessity and nature of any communication to the French Government previous to your departure must be left entirely to your own discretion; but we are of opinion that your intention of leaving Paris should be as little known there as possible before it is actually carried into execution.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

*To the DUKE OF WELLINGTON.*

Happily Lord Liverpool's anticipations as to the issue of the negotiations with America were realized, and before the end of the year peace was signed. The war had lasted two years and a half; it had been carried on with unusual and unjustifiable rancour on both sides, and in its general results had been very decidedly favorable to our arms. So much so, indeed, that some of the United States had avowed the greatest discontent, not only with their Government, to whose want of fairness towards us they attributed the original breaking out of the war, but with the constitution itself, as placing too much power in the hands of the

President for the time being. Peace at any price was clearly necessary to those who were exercising the supreme authority at Washington. How desirable it was for ourselves may be gathered from more than one of Lord Liverpool's letters, which have already been quoted. Under such circumstances the first suggestion of a negotiation met with a willing acceptance from both sides, and in the autumn commissioners were appointed to meet at Ghent, in the hope that they might succeed in framing terms on which a reconciliation not dishonorable to either might be effected; the chief of the British envoys being Mr. Henry Goulburn, who afterwards rose to high posts in subsequent Administrations. As the commissioners were not invested with the rank of plenipotentiaries, but could only transmit the proposals to their respective Governments, the negotiations were unusually protracted, and at first there seemed but little hope of their being brought to a successful issue. The Americans endeavoured to carry matters with a very high hand, and at almost the first meeting declared the views of our envoys to be so diametrically opposed to their own that they must at once break off the negotiation. One of the points for which our diplomatists contended (in accordance with Lord Liverpool's constant principle of making no arrangements which should not promise to be in some degree permanent) was that a well-ascertained boundary to the territories of the Powers should be definitely fixed;<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These statements are drawn from a project of a reply to a note received from the American plenipotentiaries on the 24th of August, and sent by Mr. Goulburn to Lord Castlereagh for his directions on it: and by him to Lord Liverpool, since Lord Castlereagh himself was on his way to Vienna, and was therefore unable to bear his part in the deliberations of the Cabinet on the subject. Nothing can be more peremptory than the language of the American commissioners, as contained in their letter of August, 1812, to the President of the United States, as laid by him before the Senate: "We need hardly say that the demands of Great Britain will receive from us an unanimous and decided negative. . . . There is not at present any hope of peace." It may be added that the settlement of boundaries demanded by the British Government included such a revision of the boundary on the

another referred to the native Indians, whom the Americans did not desire to be mentioned, but as to whom "Great Britain deemed it inconsistent with honour and justice to leave those who had been her allies in the war dependent on any policy which the United States might see fit to adopt towards them." And the entire views of our Government on the subject, with the reasons for which they insisted on the two points above mentioned, and especially on the settlement of a boundary as a strictly defensive precaution, are set forth very clearly in the following paper of instructions which, on learning the declaration of the American envoys, Lord Liverpool drew up for the guidance of our own commissioners.

August 31st, 1814.

It is perfectly true that the war between his Majesty and the United States of America was begun by the latter Power upon the pretence of maritime rights alleged to be asserted by Great Britain and disputed by the Government of the United States.

If the war which has been carried on by the Americans for two years had been purely a maritime war, or if any attack which had been made on the frontier of Canada had appeared to have been made for the purpose of diversion and of occupying the British forces in that quarter, any question respecting the boundaries of Canada might have been considered as unnecessary; but it is notorious to the whole world that the avowed object of the American Government was the conquest of Canada, and the expulsion of the British power from North America.

Is there any one who doubts that if, in consequence of a different course of events on the Continent of Europe, the British Government had been unable to reinforce their armies in Canada, and the Americans had obtained a decided superiority in that quarter, they would not have availed themselves of their situation to obtain important cessions of territory on the side of

north-eastern side of the United States as should render the communications between New Brunswick and Canada less liable to interruption, and would therefore involve the cession to Britain of a small corner of the district of Maine.



Canada, if not the entire abandonment of that country by Great Britain ; and is the American Government to be allowed to pursue a system of acquisition and aggrandizement to any extent, even to that of provinces and kingdoms, as they themselves have avowed, when the fortune of war may appear to have been in their favour, and the Government of Great Britain to be precluded under circumstances advantageous to them even from obtaining those posts which the valour of British arms may have placed in their power, because they happen to be situated within the territory allotted under former treaties to the Government of the United States?

Such a principle of negotiation was never avowed at any period antecedent to that of the Revolutionary Government of France. If the security of the British North American dominion require some sacrifices on the part of the Government of the United States, the people of America must ascribe them to the declared policy of their own Government, in making the war not a war of self-defence, nor one of the redress of grievances, real or pretended, but a war of conquest and aggrandizement.

The British Government in its present situation is bound in duty to endeavour to secure its dominions in North America against a renewal of those attempts which the American Government has avowed to be a principle of policy, and which there can be no doubt therefore that in any succeeding war between the two countries it would be their main object to accomplish.

The British Government in demanding the military possession of the four lakes, Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, Lake Michigan, and Lake Superior, demand them because the command of these lakes affords to the American Government the means of commencing a war in the heart of Canada, and because the command of them on the part of Great Britain affords no efficient means, as experience has proved, of really annoying the United States. The American Government, without any territory upon their lakes, is still in possession of a frontier towards the Canadas in which they may be defended against any attack which the British forces might make upon them.

When the relative state of the two Powers and North America is considered, it should be recollected that the British dominions in that quarter do not contain a population of 500,000 souls,

whereas the territory of the United States contains a population of more than 7,000,000; that the naval resources of the United States are at hand for attack, and that the naval resources of Great Britain are on the other side of the Atlantic. The proposal for allowing the territories on the southern banks of the lakes above mentioned to remain in the possession of the Government of the United States, provided no fortifications are erected on the shores, and no armament is permitted in the waters, has been made for the purpose of manifesting that security, and not acquisition of territory, is the object of the British Government, and that they have no desire to throw obstacles in the way of any commercial concerns which the people of the United States may be desirous of carrying on upon the lakes in time of peace.

The British Government have thus explained the grounds upon which they have made the demands brought forward in the former paper of their Commissioners respecting the boundaries of their dominions in North America. They do not wish to insist upon them beyond what the circumstances may fairly require; they are ready to discuss the details of them, and to adopt any modifications not incompatible with the object itself on which those demands are founded; but to the principle they must continue to adhere.

On the subject of the Indians the Commissioners must repeat that an adequate provision for their interest is conceded by the British Government as a *sine quâ non* in any pacific arrangement between the two countries; but it has never been the intention of the British Government to propose to the Government of the United States any stipulation on this subject which they were not ready reciprocally to adopt. They have proposed for this purpose as the basis of an arrangement a treaty concluded by the Government of the United States with the same Indians; and, whatever restrictions are imposed on the subjects of the United States with respect to the Indians in the districts under the American Government, the British Government are ready to adopt with regard to those Indians who may reside in the districts under their power.

If the peculiar circumstances of the Indian tribes and natives render such an arrangement inconsistent, let it be fairly con-

sidered whether an allotment of territory at present uninhabited by either British or American subjects cannot be allotted to them, to which the respective Governments of Great Britain and America shall forego all right. The object of the British Government is to fulfil their engagements to the Indians, to secure them against encroachments, and to remove all cause of misunderstanding in future.

After this full exposition of the sentiments of the British Government on the points above stated, it will be for the American Commissioners to determine whether they consider themselves at liberty to continue the negotiation upon the principles which have been laid down, or whether they are disposed to refer to their Government for further instructions, or, lastly, whether they will take upon themselves the responsibility of breaking off the negotiation altogether.

Lord Liverpool, keeping Lord Castlereagh informed of the course which the discussions were taking, explained that in drawing up this paper he had been not a little influenced by the desire that the "rupture of the negotiation, if it were to take place, should be thrown upon the American Commissioners, and not upon us;" but that, even with that view, "he did not think we should have been justified in conceding more than we had done. We had avoided, as much as possible, committing ourselves on any point which was likely to create embarrassment hereafter, and our reasoning on the subject of the avowed intentions of the American Government to conquer and annex Canada could hardly fail to make a considerable impression on the reasonable people in the United States." That it would produce a feeling in favour of the policy of the Government in this country was still more certain, and even more important. For the people were, not unnaturally, weary of war, and inclined to require a strong case to be made out for the continuance of hostilities in any quarter. Three weeks later he again wrote to Lord Castlereagh, still in complete uncertainty as to the view likely to be taken of our proposals by the American

Government, and, from his language on the subject, that "we have now gone to the utmost justifiable point in concession, and if they are so unreasonable as to reject our proposals we have nothing to do but to fight it out," apparently anticipating an unfavorable answer. At the same time he expressed great confidence in the success of the plans which our officers had in contemplation, adding that their operations were already creating the greatest alarm in the United States, and were rendering Mr. Madison's Government very unpopular. And before the end of the same week he was able to announce to his colleague that his expectations of decisive advantages being achieved by our commanders had been abundantly realized by the victory of Bladensberg<sup>1</sup> and the capture of Washington, and that the reports which he had received left no room to doubt that the subsequent operations of our army and fleet would be equally successful. Still, he added, "these considerations made no difference in his anxious desire to put an end to the war if it could be done consistently with our honour, though he was satisfied that, if peace were made on the conditions which the Government had proposed, they should be very much abused for it in this country. But he felt too strongly the inconvenience of the continuance of the war not to be desirous of concluding it at the expense of some popularity. And it was a satisfaction to reflect that our military success would at least divest the peace of anything which could affect our national character." It shows how complicated were the difficulties with which at the same time Lord Castlereagh had to deal at Vienna, that, in leaving it to his discretion "how much he might think proper to disclose of what had been passing to the sovereigns and ministers at Vienna," he pressed on him "the importance of doing justice to the moderation with which we were disposed to act towards America. He feared the Emperor of Russia was half an American; and it would be very desirable to do away any prejudice

<sup>1</sup> The battle of Bladensberg was fought August 24th.

which might exist in his mind, or in that of Count Nesselrode, on the subject. Whilst, on the other hand, the Americans had certainly assumed hitherto a tone in the negotiation very different from what their situation appeared to warrant."

Yet that tone the fresh reverses which have been mentioned did not at first induce them to lower, if indeed they did not even render them more obstinate. At the end of another month the prospect of a favorable issue to the negotiation seemed further removed than ever. But Lord Liverpool, resolved to leave no expedient untried, addressed an elaborate letter to Mr. Goulburn, in the hope that he might find an opportunity of pressing the arguments with which it furnished him on any of the American Commissioners with whom he might find an opportunity of confidential conversation.

*Private.*

Fife House, 21st October, 1814.

MY DEAR GOULBURN,

Although I am aware, from your correspondence with Lord Bathurst, that you have not many opportunities of confidential communication with the American Commissioners, yet as such an opportunity may probably occur with some one of them before the negotiation is brought to a conclusion, I think it very material that you should have it in your power to afford some explanations as to our relative situation, in the event of the continuance of the war.

In the first place, I do not think that, under present circumstances, the American Government can expect to make any serious impression on any part of the British dominions. The only quarter to which they can look for this purpose is Canada. Our measures there have, in my judgment, been very ill-directed by our Commander-in-chief, but we shall not omit taking the necessary means for remedying the errors which have been committed, and for prosecuting the war on that side with increased vigour. Whether we may be successful or not I will not presume to decide; the utmost, however, the American Government can, I think, hope, is to be able to keep us at bay, and reduce us to a defensive war in that quarter.

In the second place, experience has now proved that we can successfully blockade all their ports, that we can ravage their coasts, ruin their towns, destroy the little commerce which remains to them, and render their agriculture of no profit.

They must look, therefore, to the failure of their revenue, to the impoverishment of their country, and probably to a national bankruptcy, from the continuance of the war.

Sir A. Cochrane has shown that he will not spare them, and, with the additional military force which will be sent to co-operate with him, the Americans may expect greater disasters than even those which they have already encountered.

It is next to be considered at what price or sacrifice Great Britain can continue this American war. From the best calculations we have been able to make, the American war would, in addition to our peace establishment, cost about eight millions annually. This may, however, be under the truth, and I will put it therefore at ten millions. There could be no doubt that we could carry on the war at this expense with the aid of the property tax as it now exists, without any increase of debt or any addition of taxes.

I am far from saying that the continuance of the property tax at ten per cent. would not be a considerable cost, but it is an evil which experience has proved the country can bear, even when so many other burthens upon our property and trade were added to it, which are now by late events fortunately removed; and there can be no doubt, therefore, that if the Americans are unreasonable in declining the moderate terms of peace which you are authorised to propose, the country at large will feel it necessary to support a war, the worst effects of which will be the leaving them in that state in which they have existed and prospered.

It is further to be observed, that the public feeling in this country on the subject of peace with America goes far beyond any proposition which at any period of the negotiation you have been authorised to bring forward.

Is there any prospect that foreign Powers will embark in the war to support the Americans? You may rely upon it they are all too much exhausted to come willingly forward on such an occasion: besides, no Power could render the Americans any great

assistance but Spain and France. Spain is disposed to resent the injuries she has received from the American Government, and is ready to make common cause with us in the war if we desire it. The King of France and all his family are fully persuaded that Louis XVI. lost his crown in consequence of the former American war, and the last contest, I am convinced, in which they will be disposed to engage, is a war with Great Britain on account of America.

Suppose, however, the ultimate result of the continuance of the contest between Great Britain and America to be the interference of some of the continental Powers in favour of the latter; this can hardly be expected to take place till they have settled all their own interests, and consolidated their own power. It can hardly be expected, therefore, till after an interval during which America may have lost what it would take her twenty years of peace to recover.

The American Commissioners frequently allude to their own Revolutionary war, which is wholly inapplicable in every respect to the present case. In that war, whether right or wrong, they were contending for their independence: in the present war their independence is not threatened; there is no disposition to exact any terms from them inconsistent with their honour; the contest is a contest only for terms of peace. The terms proposed by Great Britain cannot be considered anywhere as extravagant or unreasonable; and is America therefore prepared to submit to all the sacrifices and losses which must arise out of the continuance of the war, rather than agree to a peace upon conditions far more favorable than those she must admit that she would have exacted, if the circumstances of Europe had enabled her to succeed in the invasion of our North American dominions?

You may make any confidential use of this letter you may think proper.

Believe me, yours, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

The motives for peace which this letter suggested were certainly calculated to convince all but the most unyielding dispositions. If the Americans could not deny Lord

Liverpool's assertions that they could make no impression on our territories ; that we could inflict the greatest injury on them both by land and sea ; and that no aid could possibly be expected by them from any European Power ; it was impossible for them long to shut their eyes to the fact that peace, if desirable for us, was indispensable to themselves. But before he could know whether any occasion for urging these topics had been found, much less what effect they were likely to have, a fresh note from the Americans seemed "to put an end to all hope" of a pacification. As he wrote to Lord Castlereagh, they now "were disposed to advance the extravagant doctrines of some of the Revolutionary Governments of France, that they never would cede any part of their dominions, even though they should have been conquered by their enemies." And they brought this principle forward during a war in which one of their chief efforts had been to conquer and annex Canada to the United States. It was a very convenient doctrine, amounting to this, "that they would always be ready to keep what they acquired, but never to give up what they lost." Still, however, there was some advantage, he considered, in postponing a positive rupture of the negotiation, and his patience was rewarded by at last receiving a counter-project from America to which he thought it possible to agree without loss of honour. He reported it to Lord Castlereagh, with all the reasons, founded on the position of affairs in America, and even more on the condition of the Continent, and on the temper of parties at home, where the leaders of the Opposition were abandoning their recent attitude of friendliness and support, in the following letter :

*Most secret and confidential.*

Fife House, 18th November, 1814.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

I send you a copy of my last letter to the Duke of Wellington. There has not yet been time to hear from him in reply, but I



think no further difficulty will occur respecting his leaving Paris ; and the knowledge that he is to have the command in America, if the war continues, may be expected to produce the most favorable effects.

We have under our consideration at present the last American note and their project of treaty, and I think we have determined, if all other points can be satisfactorily settled, not to continue the war for the purpose of obtaining or securing any acquisition of territory.

We have been led to this determination by the consideration of the unsatisfactory state of the negotiations at Vienna, and by that of the alarming situation of the interior of France. We have also been obliged to pay serious attention to the state of our finances, and to the difficulties we shall have in continuing the property tax, considering the general depression of rents, which, even under any corn law that is likely to meet with the approbation of Parliament, must be expected to take place. Under such circumstances it has appeared to us desirable to bring the American war, if possible, to a conclusion.

From what has passed in Parliament on this subject it is quite evident that the continuance of the war, upon what is called a new principle, would be violently opposed. Besides, you are probably aware that it is the Duke of Wellington's opinion, that no material military advantage can be expected to be obtained if the war goes on ; and he would have great reluctance in undertaking the command, unless we made a serious effort first to obtain peace, without insisting upon keeping any part of our conquests.

Our Parliamentary campaign has hitherto gone on very well, but the Opposition are particularly rancorous, and evidently mean to find us good employment. We shall most probably be able to adjourn about the end of the first or beginning of the second week in December, and we can carry our adjournment I think to about the 7th of January.

I still hope that you may be able to settle all that is material before the end of February.

I ought to apprise you that there is a strong feeling in this country respecting Saxony. The case against the King appears to me, I confess, to be complete, if it is expedient to act upon

it; but the objection is to the annihilation of the whole of Saxony as an independent Power, particularly considering the part which the Saxon troops took in the operations on the Elbe. Considering the prominent part which Saxony has always taken in the affairs of Germany, it would certainly be very desirable that a *noyau* of it at least should be preserved, even if it was under some other branch of the Saxon family; and I am fully convinced that the King of Prussia would gain more in character and influence by agreeing to such an arrangement, than he would lose by any reasonable sacrifice which he might make for this purpose of territory.

We have no despatches from you later than the 21st of October, but we perfectly understand that the uncertainty in which affairs might stand on the 1st day of November, may have led you to defer writing till you could afford more light as to our future prospects.

Believe me, yours, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

The feelings which he had here expressed he carried out, so that before the end of the year the treaty was concluded. He described it, with a still further explanation of his motives, in the following letter to Canning, who a few months before had undertaken the embassy to Lisbon:

Fife House, 28th December, 1814.

MY DEAR CANNING,

. . . . You will hear by this conveyance of the restoration of peace between this country and the United States of America. The general nature of the terms is accurately stated in the public papers. I will endeavour to send you a copy of the treaty by the next packet.

You know how anxious I was that we should get out of this war as soon as we could do so with honour. This anxiety was increased by the communications which I had (after you left London) with the Duke of Wellington. He had agreed to take the command of the army in the ensuing campaign if the war should continue, but he was particularly solicitous for peace, being fully satisfied that there was no vulnerable point of importance belonging to the United States which we could

hope to take and hold except New Orleans, and this settlement is one of the most unhealthy in any part of America. We might certainly land in different parts of their coast, and destroy some of their towns, or put them under contributions, but in the present state of the public mind in America it would be in vain to expect any permanent good effects from operations of this nature.

The continuance of the war for the purpose of obtaining a better frontier for Canada would, I am persuaded, have been found impracticable ; for when that question came to be argued, it would be stated, and stated with truth, that no additional frontier which you could possibly expect to obtain would materially add to the security of Canada. The weakness of Canada consists in this, that the United States possess 7,500,000 of people, the two Canadas not more than 300,000 ; that the Government of the United States have access to Canada at all times of the year, whereas Great Britain is excluded from such access for nearly six months. As long as we have the larger and better army we shall be able to defend the country, notwithstanding all these disadvantages ; but the frontier must in any case be of such prodigious extent, that it never could be made, as frontier, defensible against the means which the Americans might bring against it.

In addition to these considerations, we could not overlook the clamour which has been raised against the property tax, and the difficulties we shall certainly have in continuing it for one year to discharge the arrears of the war.

From all I have heard I do not believe it would have been possible to have continued it for the purpose of carrying on an American war, even though the negotiation had turned upon points on which persons were more generally agreed than on the question of Canadian boundary.

The question therefore was whether, under all these circumstances, it was not better to conclude the peace at the present moment, before the impatience of the country on the subject had been manifested at public meetings, or by motions in Parliament, provided we could conclude it by obliging the American Commissioners to waive all stipulations whatever on the subject of maritime rights ; by fulfilling our engagements to the Indians

who were abandoned at the treaty of 1783 ; and by declining to revive, in favour of the United States, any of the commercial advantages which they enjoyed under former treaties. As far as I have any means of judging our decision is generally approved.

I wrote to Bristol and Liverpool the night the treaty arrived. I have had a most satisfactory answer this morning from Bristol, both respecting the peace and the terms of it. I shall probably hear from your friend Gladstone by the post on Friday.

The negotiations at Vienna are not proceeding in the way we could wish ; not that I think there is any chance of their leading to hostilities, but a great deal of irritation will, I fear, remain ; and this consideration itself was deserving of some weight in deciding the question of peace with America.

Fortunately for us, the fate of the Low Countries was decided by a secret article in the Treaty of Paris ; we are not apprehensive therefore of any serious difficulty on this point. The question likewise respecting the annexation of Genoa under certain conditions to the King of Sardinia's dominions has been arranged to the satisfaction of all parties, even to that of the representative of the state of Genoa at Vienna.

The negotiations respecting Switzerland are likewise in a favorable course ; and all might therefore have ended smoothly and well, except perhaps the very difficult question of Naples, if it had not been for the extravagant pretensions of the Emperor of Russia regarding Poland. On this subject we have only a distant and contingent interest, and we must endeavour to prevent the differences respecting it leading to a renewal of war on the Continent. It is a curious circumstance that all the Russians are against the Emperor. He does not even venture to trust them with the correspondence, which passes through Prince Czartoriski, who at present holds no official situation under him.

I am persuaded from all I hear that the Emperor of Russia will never be able to carry his own views and promises respecting Poland into execution. The Russians never will submit to the Polish provinces (which have been incorporated with Russia) being severed again from the Russian empire, and reunited to the Duchy of Warsaw for the purpose of forming a kingdom of

Poland. They will not be reconciled to it on the plea of the sovereign being their own Emperor, nay, some say that they would prefer the alternative, if Poland is to be reconstructed, that it should be reconstructed under an independent sovereign.

If the Emperor of Russia cannot carry into effect the expectations he has held out to the Poles in this respect, they will be grievously disappointed, and he will not have accomplished the purpose of making them faithful and attached subjects. In short, in whatever way the affairs of Poland can now be settled, they will afford ample ground for war and confusion hereafter.

I think of going to Bath for a fortnight about the beginning of next week. We must look forward to a very active session.

I have not seen for several years so much party animosity as appeared during the three weeks of November whilst Parliament was sitting. A great struggle will probably take place on the property tax. I hope we shall be able to carry it for a year, in which case, if peace continues, substitutes may be found, though none in my judgment so equal and just; but many of the persons who have been praising the tax for the last ten years as the greatest discovery in finance are now the most loud in disapproving and objecting to the continuance of it.

I send you a copy of the treaty with America, a few copies of which for the sake of convenience have been printed at the private press in the Foreign Office. As the treaty cannot, however, properly be published until the ratifications of it are exchanged, I shall be obliged to you if you will not let this copy go out of your own hands.

I shall be most happy to hear that Mrs. Canning and your family are well, and have not suffered in consequence of the passage, and particularly how the climate agrees with your eldest son, and whether you think he gains ground in consequence of it.

Believe me, yours, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

In this letter we may remark that he dwells more on the feelings of parties in our own Parliament than he had thought it necessary to explain to Lord Castlereagh, who had not been so long absent from England. And we shall

see in the history of the ensuing sessions that he in no respect overrated the difficulties which he and his Administration would have to encounter. In this point of view it was a great satisfaction to find that the conditions of the Peace of Ghent were generally approved by those whose personal interests were most concerned in our intercourse with America, the merchants of Liverpool and Bristol; yet there can be little doubt that the ministers in terminating the war were influenced rather by the extraneous considerations which have been mentioned than by the advantages gained to England by the terms of the treaty, which was incomplete, leaving, as it did, many points of great importance to be settled by subsequent arbitration. The wisdom of giving full weight to those foreign considerations was however amply justified by the unexpected events of the next spring. And the conviction which those events forced on every one when we were again driven into war with Napoleon, that it was most fortunate that we had no other enemy to distract our attention, was so universal that the efforts made in Parliament to disparage the judgment of the Government in the negotiation were defeated by large majorities.

Meanwhile the Congress at Vienna was sitting, and the members were holding frequent conferences without making real progress on any subject. But on some points this stationary condition of the negotiations was favorable to our opinions and wishes. No positive decision had yet been arrived at with reference to Alexander's demand of Poland; and Austria had not only come over to our view of the general impolicy of allowing Russia so great an increase of power, but had also adopted the very natural idea that the occupation of Cracow by a garrison under the authority of Russia would be a position of perpetual danger to herself; nor was she more inclined to see Prussia in possession of Saxony. The conduct of the Prussian minister Hardenberg was, to say the least, of an ambiguous character, and Metternich had good reason

for believing that the most positive engagements would fail to hold him or his master if a violation of them could further their acquisition of territory, or even their object of securing the friendship of the Czar. On the 21st of November Lord Castlereagh wrote to Lord Liverpool that the "Polish question was in some degree combined with that of Saxony; as Austria could ill afford to be foiled on both these points." And, after alluding to Metternich's suspicion of Hardenberg's good faith, he added, "It is the deliberate opinion of many of their officers, and he might add ministers, that, rather than see the Russians at Cracow and the Prussians at Dresden, they had better risk a war with such support as they could get. . . . Prince Metternich had told him that in his interview with Prince Hardenberg he had opened himself unreservedly, and declared to him that no Austrian minister could sign a treaty giving way in Poland, Saxony, and Mayence;<sup>1</sup> urging him to modify his views on Saxony; and arguing on the impolicy of attempting to extinguish that monarchy against the declared purpose of France and the prevailing feeling of Germany." Lord Castlereagh had even heard that some military arrangements, having reference to and dictated by the possibility of immediate war, had been adopted at Vienna. Metternich's own opinion, however, at this time, was that the knowledge that Austria was prepared to resist would make resistance unnecessary. And not only he, but Hardenberg also, reported to Lord Castlereagh that "Prince Czartoriski had promised to urge the Czar to make some concessions on the subject of Poland;" Metternich further expressing his confidence that "Prussia would listen to modifications in the Saxon arrangements to which his Court attached the greatest importance."

Lord Castlereagh did not place too much reliance on those opinions, because he looked on both the Austrian and Prussian as men inclined "to a sanguine mode of

<sup>1</sup> We ourselves, as has been mentioned, had proposed to allot Mayence to Prussia, and that point had been almost decided.

viewing things." But four days afterwards he saw indications of a possibility that their anticipations might be realized in the conduct and language of the Czar himself. Alexander had at length allowed his claim on Poland to be looked on "avowedly as one for negotiation. In all his (Lord Castlereagh's) previous interviews, as well as in the first paper received from the Emperor, it had been treated as one upon which Russia alone was to pronounce. His Imperial Majesty's language had uniformly been, 'Je donnerai ce qu'il faut à la Prusse, mais je ne donnerai pas un village à l'Autriche. J'ai conquis le Duché, et j'ai 480,000 hommes à le garder.'" That he had changed his tone our ambassador looked on as attributable to the course which he himself had adopted. As he had "employed every conciliatory representation in vain," his only remaining hope seemed to be "to try so to place the argument upon the treaties before him, and upon the general aspect of the questions, as to awaken his mind to a sense of the possible consequences to which his conduct might lead." He was aware that in some respects this line of conduct weakened his own position "for purposes of mediation. Still he was confident that the Emperor would never have submitted himself to a negotiation at all, if this course had not been adopted, but would have stood firm upon the despotism of his military tenure. The fruits that might result from this concession might be small, or none ; but it was something to bring him down in doctrine to a level with other Powers : and although, from his personal experience of his Imperial Majesty's character, Lord Castlereagh expected nothing from his friendship to his allies, and as little from his generosity or his sense of justice, yet he still hoped something from his fears. The general sentiment of dissatisfaction and alarm occasioned by his conduct was becoming too strong and too universal to be any longer a secret from him. It existed extensively among his own subjects, and Lord Castlereagh had reason to believe that this fact had not been concealed from him."



Partly from his natural temperament, which was inclined to nervousness and anxiety when not braced up by the necessity for instant action and the feeling of responsibility, impulses which always led him to decide promptly and act firmly, Lord Liverpool himself was less hopeful than Lord Castlereagh. A day or two before he received the first of these letters he wrote to the Duke of Wellington at Paris :

We are very much dissatisfied at the last accounts we have received from Vienna. The course which the negotiation has taken is particularly embarrassing. Lord Castlereagh has been substantially right in all his points ; but I wish we had not been made so much *principals* in the Polish question. I never thought it could be satisfactorily settled after it had once become a subject of contest. If the arrangements respecting the Duchy of Warsaw could have been quietly agreed upon amongst the three Powers as the result of the Treaty of Kalisch, and of that of the 9th of September, 1813,<sup>1</sup> there need have been no difficulty on the subject. It in that case would have been wholly unnecessary, and, I think, very imprudent, for us to have ever started the idea of Poland and Polish independence. This question has, however, now been forced on us by Russia. It would be visionary to suppose that Poland can really be established, after all that has passed, as an independent country ; and we are thus brought practically to struggle for a question of partition, which is always odious in itself, in which we might have acquiesced as the result of former engagements, but for which it is painful for us to be obliged to contend on any other ground.

Whatever may be the result of this question, I sincerely hope however that there will be no war on the Continent. It may be quite true that, if the Emperor of Russia does not relax in his pretensions, the peace of Europe may not be of long duration ; but, considering the present state of France, of the Low Countries, and of Italy, I should regard a peace for two or

<sup>1</sup> Signed at Toplitz between Great Britain, Austria, Russia, and Prussia.

three years as a great blessing. It might reasonably be expected that during that time the revolutionary spirit in those countries would in a great degree evaporate ; that the restored sovereigns would find the means of consolidating their authority ; that the population would return to peaceful habits ; and that, if a war should then arise, it would not be a revolutionary war, but that it would resemble in its character and effects those wars which occurred in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, before the commencement of the French Revolution.

It cannot be denied that these were statesmanlike views. Since we had acquiesced in the previous partitions of Poland, not as acts of which we approved, but as measures with which we had no concern or call to interfere, we might reasonably have abstained from noticing any new arrangements which might plausibly be represented as the complement of former settlements. And still less could it be doubted that even wars caused, like those of the last century, by the unprincipled lust of conquest and acquisition, (mischievous and wicked as they were,) were yet as being waged for a definite and limited object, fraught with less danger to the permanent tranquillity of the world, and to the principles on which all peace must rest, than such a contest as that out of which Europe had just emerged, and which had its rise in, and had been maintained throughout its unexampled duration<sup>1</sup> by the proselytising and insatiable spirit of revolution.

But, even while thus professing a willingness to discuss his claim to Poland amicably, Alexander endeavoured to render all discussion superfluous by a course of action which should take the rest of the allies by surprise, and leave them no alternative but that of acquiescence. Since the battle of Leipsic, Saxony had been occupied by a Russian army, and in the second week in November its

<sup>1</sup> The Revolutionary war had lasted twenty-two years. The war of 1618, though nominally longer, had been practically interrupted by so many intervals of rest that it had witnessed far fewer campaigns of active operation.

commander, Prince Repnin, had formally handed over the country to the Prussians, accompanying the act with a proclamation in which he affirmed that the arrangement had received the sanction of England and Austria. Lord Liverpool was highly indignant at such a misrepresentation. He wrote at once to Lord Castlereagh to remind him that he (Lord Castlereagh) "had consented to the eventual annexation of that country to the Prussian dominions only conditionally ; and that the conditions on which that annexation was to take place had certainly not been complied with. Even if he had stated his intention of agreeing to the annexation unconditionally, such a communication could only have been confidential till the subject had been brought before Congress, and it was not decent therefore that the annexation should have been announced as a decided point amongst the great Powers under the present circumstances. He himself had no doubt that this was really a trick of the Russians for the purpose of making their own point of Poland secure, and, in fact, of deciding it without any reference to the Congress ;" and to counteract this design he suggested to his colleague the propriety of at once taking "some official notice" of the proceeding. The cases of Poland and Saxony were indeed connected. But, though both the Czar and the King of Prussia saw this as well as Lord Liverpool, the combination led to a result far different from that which the King of Prussia desired, since the degree in which Russia was eventually compelled to abate her claim to Poland diminished also his pretence for a claim on Saxony ; so that the preservation of provinces in the east, about which he was less anxious, barred him from the acquisition of a territory of far greater value and political importance in the west.

Another month passed, and still Lord Castlereagh was forced to report to his chief that he was making no progress. He wrote home for fresh instructions, intimating at the same time his opinion that, as it was now "certain that nothing on an enlarged and liberal scale of policy could be

expected, and that the arrangement as to the adjustment of frontier between Russia and the adjacent states must remain both defective and unsatisfactory," we should nevertheless "bring the whole arrangement, subject to this great and obvious defect, if possible, to a tolerable close in its other details, rather than risk a contest to meet anticipated danger, and to correct faults that would always more or less abound in all extended transactions of this nature."

He confessed himself absolutely unable to foresee, with any approach to certainty, what course events might take during the next few weeks. They might "unexpectedly assume a better aspect," or the state of affairs might in equal likelihood "lead to a total stagnation, or, as Europe was more extensively armed than at any former period, might suddenly end in war." The result, however, which he himself thought the most probable, was "such an adherence, short of war, to their own views, that the leading Powers remaining armed might refuse to accede to each other's pretensions, and the Congress might terminate either in a general state of provisional occupancy, or in the partial adjustment of particular parts of the European arrangement among the Powers locally most interested. If war should arise, he thought it had every prospect of becoming general in Germany." And therefore the question which he desired Lord Liverpool to weigh was "whether we should at once appear as a party in the war; or whether we should rather interfere as armed mediators, if possible, to stop the war; or remain inactive till, by an attack on some interest of which we were the immediate guardians, our interposition should be rendered indispensable." Another question was whether, in the event of our interposing to prevent war, we should act "singly or in conjunction with France." He concluded by saying that "he had suggested the idea of an armed mediation as an expedient short of actual war, because he thought there might be an interval, after hostilities had commenced, during which Great Britain and France might assume this

character, to give weight to which the army of the Low Countries and Hanover might be united under the Duke of Wellington on the Lower Rhine, while the French army was concentrated on the side of Strasburg. In this situation they might invite other Powers to associate themselves to their object of arresting the war."

The answer and instructions which he requested are contained in the following letter :

*Most secret and confidential.*

Fife House, 23d December, 1814.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

We have received your despatches of the 5th and 7th inst. and the very important private letter addressed to me of the former date. The contents of these papers have been fully considered, and we are decidedly and unanimously of opinion that all your endeavours should be directed to the continuance of peace ; that there is no mode in which the arrangements in Poland, Germany, and Italy can be settled consistently with the stipulations of the Treaty of Paris, which is not to be preferred, under present circumstances, to a renewal of hostilities between the continental Powers. Such an event could not at this time take place in Europe without the danger of our being involved in it at no distant period, unless we were prepared to purchase neutrality by sacrifices which would be neither consistent with our character nor our safety.

With these sentiments deeply impressed upon our minds, we must not disguise from you that it would be quite impossible to embark this country in a war at present, except upon a clear point of honour, or for some distinct British interest of sufficient magnitude to reconcile the country to it.

The defence of Holland and the Low Countries is the only object on the Continent of Europe which would be regarded in this light, and for which we could reasonably expect the support of Parliament in imposing or supporting those burthens on the country which our being involved in a war would render indispensable.

If the Austrian Government is once satisfied that they have no

chance of receiving subsidies from Great Britain, they will not be disposed to urge their pretensions to the extent of war, and the differences between them and the other Powers will I trust be in some way or other arranged without an appeal to arms.

We are ready, notwithstanding these considerations, to give full weight to the opinion contained in your private letter of the 5th inst. that, adverting to the actual situation of the great Powers on the Continent, how generally they are armed, and how little they are all able to support the expense of their existing establishments, a state of war may possibly arise amongst them, if not from any deliberate view of policy, yet out of the circumstances in which they may find themselves placed.

We concur with you that, if war should be renewed on the Continent, it would be in vain to expect that France would long be kept out of it; and, if France were once embarked without a previous understanding with Great Britain, her efforts might in the first instance be directed, if not against Belgium, at least against the countries between the Meuse and the Rhine, which are now principally occupied by the Russian armies.

We agree therefore that a *rapprochement* between this country and France is most desirable at the present moment, and we shall entirely approve of your proceeding to open communications on all the subjects now under discussion with the French Government, both through Prince Talleyrand at Vienna, and through the Duke of Wellington at Paris.

On whatever points France and England might be found to agree, the knowledge of a good understanding upon these points between two such Powers could hardly fail to give their united opinion considerable weight.

With respect to the line of conduct which it may be expedient for us to adopt in the event of the sudden renewal of war upon the Continent, it must depend upon such a variety of circumstances, and must be influenced so materially by the character which the war may assume, that, after the fullest consideration, we have found it impossible to frame instructions which can be applicable to the various contingencies to which the renewal of the war may give rise. We are not insensible to some of the advantages which might be derived in such a case from a joint armed mediation on the part of Great Britain and France; but

a measure of this kind would be so novel and extraordinary, and might be attended with so many consequences which cannot now be foreseen, that it appears to us to be quite impossible to determine upon it as a course of policy before we are distinctly acquainted with all the circumstances under which the war shall have originated, with the immediate cause of it, and with the different pretensions and expectations of the Powers who may have engaged in it.

We do not see any considerable inconvenience that can arise from our deferring our decision on this and on other points connected with it until the occasion shall arise, especially as we have no particular nor national interest in any of the objects which are most seriously contested at this time, and as the avowed purpose therefore of our policy is not to carry any point of our own, but to consolidate the peace concluded at Paris by an amicable adjustment of the differences which have unfortunately occurred amongst other Powers.

It may be of the utmost importance in the meantime to anticipate the Emperor of Russia, who, having carried his objects in the east of Europe, may be disposed to purchase the concurrence of France by an acquiescence in her views in other quarters. The known honour and integrity of the King of France, however, will be our best security against his contracting any engagements inconsistent with the stipulations of the peace which he has concluded, and contrary to his good faith towards us, provided we treat him and his Government with that consideration and confidence which they regard, not unjustly, as due to them, and which may induce them to look to a cordial understanding with Great Britain as the best prospect of recovering their fair influence in Europe.

We know these were the sentiments of the King of France and his minister when you saw them in your way through Paris in the month of August last, and we have no reason to believe that their sentiments in this respect have undergone any change since that time.

*P.S.* I leave this and my other letters to you by the same conveyance open for the Duke of Wellington's perusal.

Believe me, yours, &c.

LIVERPOOL

The instructions contained in this letter were manifestly dictated in part by our financial difficulties, by the state of our Parliamentary parties, and by the line of conduct which might be expected from the Opposition. But under different circumstances, and even if the Cabinet had been less compelled to study such considerations, the answer would probably have been couched in the same spirit, since at all times Lord Liverpool looked on peace as to be preserved or restored at any price save that of honour. And this consideration was in his eyes and those of all his colleagues so paramount to every other, that in another letter which he forwarded to Vienna, on the same day, he authorised Lord Castlereagh, "if he should be pressed to become a party to the arrangements of the Czar with respect to his acquisition of Warsaw, to agree to them, provided it were distinctly stipulated in the treaty that at least the Polish provinces incorporated with Russia since 1791 should be reunited to the Duchy of Warsaw, so as to form a distinct kingdom of Poland under a free constitution." The Czar himself could hardly, he thought, object to this condition, so fully did it harmonize with his previous language on the subject; while, "if the Crown of Russia were to be aggrandized to the extent now proposed, it would afford some security to Europe, however inadequate, that the empire should consist of two distinct kingdoms, and that one of them should be subject to the control of a more or less popular government." While, if Alexander should refuse his consent to such a stipulation (and he was too unsteady for his conduct to be securely calculated on), it might be well to be able to inform his confidant Czartoriski and the other Poles, that Britain had proposed such a measure. Perhaps the most remarkable thing in either the Secretary's questions or the Prime Minister's reply is the feeling which both display in favour of inviting the co-operation of France, a policy which indicates no little superiority, on the part of these statesmen, to national and, in the minds of many, inve-



terate prejudice; since, though the present generation has seen the two nations more than once acting in warlike co-operation, and great blessings not only to Europe, but to all Christendom and to general civilization, arising from their combination, the rare instances of alliance which their past annals presented were connected with circumstances on which neither country could look back with pride or satisfaction, and, in recent times, all their mutual feelings were on the one side exasperated by the recollection of repeated disasters, or on the other fanned into disdain by the cherished memories of a thousand triumphs. Indeed, even while Lord Liverpool saw the advantages to be derived from the co-operation of the two countries, he was not insensible to the objections to which at the moment it was liable from the probability of but few coinciding with him. As he wrote to the Duke of Wellington, while instructing him "to seek an audience of Louis," in order "to explain to him generally the feelings of the Prince Regent's Government towards him, and thereby to prepare him for any communications which Lord Castlereagh might make to Talleyrand at Vienna," he added that "he could not conceal from himself that an avowed union between Great Britain and France would be likely to be unpopular in both countries;" and the motive which had the greatest influence with him was the conviction that "among the great Powers the King of France was the only sovereign in whom we could have any real confidence. The Emperor of Russia was profligate from vanity and self-sufficiency, if not from principle. The King of Prussia might be a well-meaning man, but he was the dupe of the Emperor of Russia. The Emperor of Austria he believed to be an honest man, but he had a minister in whom no one could trust, who considered all policy as consisting in finesse and trick, and who had got his Government and himself into more difficulties by his devices than could have occurred from a course of plain dealing."

Lord Liverpool's personal feelings and opinions on all

the points at the moment under negotiation may perhaps be even more clearly seen in some passages of a letter of his to Mr. Cooke, which crossed Lord Castlereagh's request for instructions on its way.

"He was not," he said, "surprised at the conduct of the Emperor of Russia. He was vain, self-sufficient, and obstinate; with some talent, but with no common sense or tact. Lord Liverpool himself was strongly impressed with the opinion that this business of Poland would ultimately prove his ruin. If he should detach the Polish provinces incorporated with Russia from that country, for the purpose of forming a Polish kingdom, he never would be forgiven by the Russians. If, on the other hand, he should annex the Duchy of Warsaw to Russia, and consider the whole as a mere territorial question, the Poles would justly reproach him as having deceived them, and they would become his bitterest enemies. In short, he himself saw nothing but future commotion out of this Polish business, let it now end as it might."

With respect to Saxony, he "hoped Lord Castlereagh might be able to save a part of it. The King of Prussia might, from his great exertions, be fairly entitled to some part of it, especially if the King of Saxony was to be restored; but Lord Liverpool did not like the annihilation of ancient independent states, and was persuaded that the annihilation of Saxony would produce the worst moral effects in Germany and throughout Europe. He thought likewise that the feelings of the King of France on this question ought, in some degree, to be considered; it was the only great point on which they might have an opportunity of gratifying him."

He also saw great difficulties in the arrangement of the affairs of Italy. Murat, as we have seen, had contrived to entangle the allies in engagements which both our ministers and those of France saw to be fraught with danger, but out of which it was not easy to find an honorable escape. "If," wrote Lord Liverpool, "the great Powers at Vienna

had been cordially united in sentiment from the beginning, there might have been some chance of frightening Murat out of Naples with a compensation. I have no hopes of such a result now. He will have gained both strength and confidence from the known divisions of the allies; and, if I am not misinformed, he is too powerful at Naples to be driven from thence without a great military effort. I cannot wish, under present circumstances, to see that effort made; such a war would not long be confined to Naples. It would besides be very difficult for us to take a prominent part against Murat, however we might wish it, unless we had stronger proofs of his treason than any I have yet seen."

Lord Liverpool was becoming anxious too about the ensuing Parliamentary campaign, in which, as he said, "the Opposition were determined to show no forbearance." There had been a short session in November, in which they had given sufficient indications of such a purpose in both Houses; and, though Lord Liverpool himself was a match for all his assailants among the Peers, the contest had been less equal in the Commons, and he therefore looked on it as absolutely necessary for Lord Castlereagh to return home before Parliament re-assembled in February.

In subsequent letters he explained the matters on which he expected the chief difficulties to arise to Lord Castlereagh himself. "Meetings had been held in different parts of the country on the subject of the property tax, and such a spirit had arisen on this subject that he feared it would be quite impossible to carry the tax for the ensuing year without an engagement to give it up afterwards if the wars should not be renewed, and not to keep any part of it to defray the expenses of the peace establishment." In another letter he says, "The more complicated our affairs become in Europe, the more essential it is that you should be here by the meeting of Parliament." And he suggested that, if the negotiations of the Congress were not finished by that time, Wellington,

whom, as we have seen, he was anxious on any pretence to remove from Paris, should relieve him at Vienna.

At that capital indeed matters were becoming more complicated every day. A lifelike account of the perplexities of the different diplomatists, arising chiefly from the vagaries of the Czar, may be gathered from the following letter, which at the end of the year Lord Liverpool received from Mr. Cooke :

*Most secret and confidential.*

Vienna, 18th December, 1814.

MY DEAR LORD,

I have been so little in the world lately that I have little gossip to send.

Metternich plumes himself much on his last interview with the Emperor of Russia. The Emperor was very violent in his language to him. In his reply Metternich observed, that he hoped his Imperial Majesty would forgive the patience with which he submitted to his language, as for the course of eight years he had been accustomed to similar language from Buonaparte. The Emperor was conciliatory to the Emperor of Austria, and attributed all their differences to his enemy Metternich. He has been, and is, attempting to displace him, and has been courting Prince Schwartzberg.

I believe he hinted his wishes to make Schwartzberg minister to Talleyrand.

Prince Hardenberg has been much distressed since his foolish *demarche*, of which he is ashamed ; and he expresses himself most violently against the approaches which he sees Metternich is making to Talleyrand.

I am confident Metternich's mind has been made up within these last few days to an alliance with France, and I shall not be surprised if he makes additional overtures without consulting Lord Castlereagh, in case Talleyrand is favorable upon his overture as to Saxony. This is my conjecture. This will be with a view to put us at the tail of such an alliance. And the Austrians begin to think that they see a way out of their engagements with Murat, who I hear is active and on the move.

I understand the language in the coffee-houses here grows very violent against Russia.

The general language of the Plenipotentiaries is most strongly for peace, and I understand the result of the war has been so severe to the landholders, especially in the north of Germany, that they feel despair at the idea of a new war; yet all allow the peace, with Russia advanced to the Oder, is not likely to last.

Notwithstanding all Lord Castlereagh's efforts for conciliation, I am confident no one here can answer for events. There is great irritation in the Cabinets. If Austria goes on and succeeds in her overtures with France, and a tone of pacific authority is taken, it is not impossible that Prussia will compromise. Talleyrand expressed to me the utmost rancour against Prussia some time ago, and the Prussian generals so conduct themselves in the occupied countries as to make their Government hated. Besides, were a war to take place, Prussia, not Russia, would bear the burden; and the former would lose Saxony altogether, if not also the provinces they expect from the kingdom of Westphalia, and on the left bank of the Rhine. They talk of the match with the Archduchess and the Prince of Wirtemburgh as settled, although he is a lover of the Princess Bagration at present. He is also a great intriguer for the Russians, and a great circulator of self-fabricated reports.

They say the Kings of Bavaria and Wirtemburgh set off on the 23d.

Ever most truly,

Your Lordship's most obedient servant,

E. COOKE.

The debates have made a sensation here. Metternich thinks them unfavorable to Government, and is of opinion the Administration cannot last: such was one of his effusions. He is most intolerably loose and giddy with the women.

A further light, too, is thrown upon these complications by another, from which it will be sufficient to give a few extracts:

I mentioned that the Emperor of Russia had made a direct attack on Metternich, and abused him violently before he set

out for Buda. At Buda he made a most violent complaint against him to the Emperor of Austria. The latter warmly replied, that his minister only acted by his orders ; that he had taken the advice of his Council of State, and that they were more determined than Metternich. The Emperor of Russia said he hoped they should never quarrel ; but that, if they were to do so, he trusted they might be at peace for at least two or three years : to which Francis replied, that, if they were to quarrel, the sooner the better. On his return from Buda the Emperor tried to bribe Metternich. A paper was shown him with the following passage in it : "Une personne de la plus grande distinction s'est mise en apparence sur le pied de la brouillerie avec Votre Altesse. Elle a une influence très-directe sur vos intérêts personnels. L'intérêt des deux nations étant le même, si Votre Altesse cesse de s'opposer à ses vues, elle en éprouvera la reconnaissance. Cette reconnaissance consiste d'abord dans un million d'argent comptant (100,000*l.* sterling), à être payé par les meilleures traites sur les banquiers les plus assurés de Vienne. L'autre V. A. le comprendra lui-même." . . . And the Emperor expressed in person to Metternich his regret that his temper had carried him away, and begged to renew intercourse with him.<sup>1</sup>

As soon as he [the Czar] had sent his answer to Lord Castlereagh, he allowed it to be shown to his people. They were all outrageous against the piece : said it was nothing but a tissue of *sottises* and *bêtises*, and that it tended to ruin the Emperor's cause and character. The Emperor got alarmed, and formed a resolution not to receive a reply ; and in order to be beforehand with Lord Castlereagh, he made up to Prince Hardenberg at a ball, talked to him at length and with eagerness, and

<sup>1</sup> Alison (Life of Lord Castlereagh, ii. 543), quoting Thiers, relates that on another occasion the Czar lost his temper still more outrageously. Metternich having stated the views of Austria on the subject of Poland, "the Czar became violently irritated. 'The remark,' said he, 'is false and improper ; and you are probably the only man in Austria who would venture to address Russia in such terms of *revolt*.' 'If such are the terms on which the Cabinets are hereafter to be,' replied Metternich, 'I have only to request the Emperor, my master, to send another representative of Austria to the Congress.'"

invited him to an interview, and then fixed the King of Prussia to be present. In that conference he exerted himself to the utmost to work on the King and Prince, and not without some effect; and he tried to inspire them with jealousy of Austria and her insincerity. . . .

It is wonderful how quiet Vienna is. We hardly know, but at fêtes, that so many sovereigns are here. There are but little politics in the town: no coffee-houses of reputation. It is said that the people are desired not to talk on politics, and the people here are the most tractable and obedient you can conceive. Lady Castlereagh continues her suppers, and we have curious medleys almost every night. Lord Stewart<sup>1</sup> gives a ball to-night; the Emperor, the Empress, and the King of Prussia will be there. . . .

The French are much in the background, and they acknowledge themselves to be the object of universal hatred and dread. A disunion of the great Powers may give them scope for activity; and you know that preparations are making at Paris accordingly for augmenting their army. Talleyrand has been of disservice in canvassing against the Saxon point and alarming Prussia, whom he hates most cordially; but a man who has been so bribed has not much weight.

An additional complication had been given to the question of Saxony by a singular and almost unaccountable act of treachery on the part of the Prussian minister, Prince Hardenberg, who betrayed to the Czar parts of a confidential correspondence which he had with Metternich on the subject, with the comment, for which there was no ground whatever, that "Austria had broken faith with Prussia on the point of Saxony in consequence of Prussia refusing to enter into an hostile alliance against Russia." Alexander complained to the Emperor Francis of Metternich's conduct, who, to justify himself, produced all his own letters to Hardenberg, leaving it to Hardenberg to imitate his candour by the production of those of his own writing if he pleased; "the fact being," as Lord Castlereagh

<sup>1</sup> At this time our Ambassador at Vienna.

reported to Lord Liverpool, that "the only really objectionable letters were Hardenberg's own. Metternich's were perfectly fair diplomatic papers, avowing in very proper terms the objections of his Court to the Russian views, whereas Hardenberg, in order to escape an avowed opposition to Russia, in which he found himself disowned, did not confine himself to being most unnecessarily the advocate of peace, but undertook to show that the Emperor [of Russia] must soon be ruined by his own politics; that in a few years his military power would become comparatively feeble; and that it was *then the allies might seize an occasion of doing themselves justice*. . . . The whole had made for two days a great sensation." But Lord Castlereagh's comment on the whole was that, as he had said on former occasions, "the climate of Russia was often more serene after a good squall; and that this disclosure" [since the refusal of Hardenberg to respond to Metternich's challenge by producing his own letters could hardly fail to be interpreted as an admission that they contained things not very flattering or agreeable to his Imperial Majesty] "had produced rather a salutary impression on the Emperor's mind, since he now clearly perceived that he himself [Lord Castlereagh] had not been mistaken in representing to him the real feelings of the allies: and his own persuasion was that, if Metternich and Hardenberg had told as bold truths to Alexander in their interviews with him as they did to each other in their letters, and had supported *himself* in the clear and decisive tone which their official correspondence had entitled him to expect, the Emperor of Russia would have come to a suitable arrangement with respect to Poland, notwithstanding the embarrassment he had previously created for himself by hopes given to the Poles." And his belief in the degree in which this knowledge of the universal feeling on the subject had impressed the Czar was increased by numerous little circumstances which happened during the next few days. On Christmas Day he wrote to Lord



Liverpool that his own belief had always been that "the Prussian plenipotentiary Baron Humboldt's design was to *take great care* not to save so much of Poland as to weaken their claim to the whole of Saxony." He himself had long since protested against "Saxony being the compensation to Prussia for an excessive cession of territory to Russia on the side of Poland." And now, within the last day or two, "the irritation [of the Emperor] was so visibly subsiding that he had seen reason to feel very sanguine that, "if France and the King of Saxony would assist him in assigning liberally to Prussia out of Saxony," he should be able to effect a settlement of both questions.

Talleyrand, apparently, did not coincide in this expectation, but was "urgent with Lord Castlereagh to begin with an engagement between England, France, and Austria;" to which the British Minister objected as either superfluous at the moment or mischievous. "We were already united in opinion, and to form an alliance prematurely might augment the chances of war rather than of an amicable settlement, which he trusted was the object which they all had in view. Talleyrand's tone, however, was very high and hostile to Prussia."

The intelligence of the conclusion of the Treaty of Ghent came very opportunely to give additional weight to our views, from the additional power which it gave us of enforcing them. And from the day of its arrival Lord Castlereagh perceived an alteration in the Czar's tone. But there was another question, to which allusion has already been made, about which the assembled diplomats, and especially our own minister and his colleagues at home, were at least as anxious as they were about Poland.

The Duke of Wellington wrote from Paris that King Louis considered the chances of disturbance in Europe, and particularly in France, were very much increased by leaving Murat on the throne of Naples, and that he himself

“concurred very much in that opinion. If he were gone, Buonaparte at Elba would not be an object of great dread.” The Duke even went the length of suggesting a forcible expulsion of the Neapolitan monarch from his dominions, drawing up a statement of the armament which would be necessary, with the probable duration and expense of the campaign, with a precision of detail which showed how anxious he was to recommend the enterprise. In predicting the events, not only of a single campaign in the Peninsula, but of a series of campaigns and an entire war, the Duke had exhibited a power of taking into one estimate every circumstance, whether favorable or adverse, and an accurate foresight of general results, which is probably unequalled. In political affairs, too, there were occasions in which a keen practical insight into complications and difficulties gave a character of statesmanlike sagacity to his remarks, while a rigorous and unswerving adherence to the principles and dictates of the most scrupulous honesty was a still more conspicuous and unfailing characteristic of his designs and counsels. But in the present instance his views and recommendations scarcely display these qualities. The soundness, indeed, of his judgment, or rather of the reasons which led to his concurrence with the apprehensions entertained by Louis and his ministers of the danger with which the proximity of Napoleon at Elba and Murat at Naples threatened France and Europe, was unquestionable. It was a peril which from the first had struck every British statesman, and, as we have seen, had led Lord Castlereagh to refuse to make Britain a party to the folly to which Alexander, in his absence, had committed the rest of the allies. But it was a different question how far it was equitable to make Murat pay the penalty of the Czar’s theatrical generosity, and to expel him by force of arms because, by an impolicy to which he had in nowise contributed, we had placed his brother-in-law too near him. Still less was it easy to see why, as the Duke’s proposition contemplated,

Spain and Portugal should be called on to co-operate in the attack to be made upon him.<sup>1</sup> And Lord Liverpool had not only scruples on the point whether Murat's recent conduct would justify our treating him as an enemy, but a very decided conviction that it would be impossible to induce Parliament or the country to approve of our engaging in measures of active hostility against him. He would indeed have been glad to have got rid of him, but it was clearly a case in which we could not act on our own wishes alone; and it was notorious that the ally to whom we were most bound, Austria, was the Power above all others pledged to maintain him on the throne, though the Emperor Francis was personally the nearest relation of Ferdinand, the prince who, if Murat were to be expelled from Naples, would by such a transaction be at once replaced in the enjoyment of his hereditary authority.

Lord Castlereagh had written to Lord Liverpool on the subject a few days before the Duke, explaining Talleyrand's views, and also his own. Talleyrand, who, as if to avoid the suspicion of casting any longing lingering look towards the ruler in whose service he had been so long, and from whom he had received so many favours, was especially earnest in his hostility to all Napoleon's connexions, had proposed to induce all the Powers "to recognise Ferdinand IV. as the legitimate sovereign of Naples, and to bind themselves neither directly nor indirectly to support any pretensions which might be incompatible with his rights." And he had expressed his expectation that "a declaration so frank and unanimous, and the conviction which it must force on Murat that he would find support

<sup>1</sup> The Duke's words were: "If the British Government should undertake this operation, it should be performed by the armies of the allies of the Peninsular war, which might be got in the following proportions; viz. 10,000 infantry from Spain, 12,000 infantry from Portugal, 20,000 of all arms from Great Britain, and 10,000 of all arms from Sicily, . . . with 40,000 men which might be sent from the southern parts of France by sea into the Roman States." The date of the letter is Paris, December 25th, 1814.

in no quarter, would render the employment of force superfluous." Murat, he thought, would lay down his authority, and be glad to make terms with foes so numerous as to be irresistible. Lord Castlereagh desired to obtain the same result by milder means. He was perhaps more really convinced than Talleyrand, at all events he was more impartial and disinterested in the conviction, that "the peace of Europe could only be effectually consolidated by the restoration of the ancient and legitimate family to the throne of Naples." But he hoped to obtain this end by inducing Murat to make a voluntary compromise, "and, preferring the repose and safety of the [Neapolitan] nation to the gratification of his own ambition, to consent peaceably to abdicate in favour of the ancient sovereign" on being provided with a magnificent establishment in any country of Europe which he might choose for his residence. Lord Liverpool's sentiments on the whole question were expressed to both his correspondents in the following letters :

Fife House, 23d December, 1814.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

You appear to be of opinion that the French Government might be conciliated to our views on most other points by our agreeing to make common cause with them on the point of Naples.

This question is full of difficulty. The first point to be considered is how far we can enter into any concert against Murat with good faith ; and this must depend upon whether he is to be regarded as having fairly fulfilled his engagements, after the conclusion of peace between him and Austria.

If he acted fairly, or I should rather say, if he did not act unfairly by the allies in the subsequent operations of the armies, he has certainly reason to depend upon our favorable disposition towards him ; and though we were no parties to the treaty of peace, and are not bound to defend him, we should not be justified in assisting to dethrone him.

We have read the copy of his statement which you have sent us,

and the paper of observations upon it. If this letter be the production of General Nugent, his opinion is deserving of considerable weight, as well from the situation which he held in that part of the Austrian army whose operations were most immediately connected with those of the Neapolitan forces, as from the appeal which Murat appears to make to him. If it should have been drawn up by any other person, I should recommend that both the papers should be referred to General Nugent for his opinion upon them.

You have done quite right in sending these two papers to Lord William Bentinck, and we must leave it to you to decide, upon the best evidence you can obtain, how far Murat's conduct has or has not absolved us from all obligation towards him.

It is of the utmost importance, however, that before we are committed on this question you should refer to the correspondence on that subject, and particularly to the assurances given in your despatch to Lord William Bentinck of the 3d of April last. An extract from this despatch has been published by Murat; and it is quite essential therefore that the case against him should be such as will enable us, after such assurances, to justify our change of conduct towards him to the Parliament and to the world.

Supposing, however, his treachery, or wilful and culpable inactivity, to be clearly established, how are we to get rid of him? If he will accept of a compensation, and such compensation can be found, the difficulty is solved; but, if he is determined to defend himself, who is the Power to be charged with expelling him? Would it be safe under the present circumstances of Italy, and the unpopularity of most of the Governments re-established there, especially that of Austria, to revive a state of war in that country?

We are inclined to think that it would be more safe and prudent for the Powers of Europe to tolerate Murat, than for any of them to undertake hostilities for the purpose of expelling him. A war carried on by France, however, in Germany or the Low Countries, would be so much greater an evil to Great Britain than a war carried on by her in Italy, that, if the former can be avoided only by the occurrence of the latter, it appears to us incomparably the least evil of the two. But we can only be

justified in encouraging or giving our sanction to such a line of policy by the conviction that the conduct of Murat subsequent to his engagements with Austria had been of a nature to discharge us from all obligations towards him.

Believe me, yours, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

Fife House, 31st December, 1814.

MY DEAR DUKE,

I have received your private letter of the 25th inst., written in consequence of the communication which you had from Count Blacas on the subject of leaving Murat on the throne of Naples.

One of my letters to Lord Castlereagh, of the 23d inst., which I left open for your perusal, will have explained to you the sentiments of the Government on this point.

The first question is, whether we are released from all obligation to Murat in consequence of his having violated the engagements into which he entered with the Austrian Government. I think it very doubtful whether he fulfilled these engagements; but I am not satisfied that the proof of his violation of them is sufficiently established to enable us to do more at present than to withhold all further recognition of him.

Supposing, however, the inquiries of Lord Castlereagh to lead to a thorough conviction that Murat's conduct, after signing the treaty with Austria, was either so treacherous, or that he was so culpably and intentionally inactive, as to absolve us from all obligation to him, I should in that case deceive you if I did not state most explicitly that I am satisfied that, under present circumstances, the country could not be brought to sanction or support the employment of a British army, or of an army in British pay, for the purpose of driving him from the throne of Naples.

The utmost that could be done by us would be to take a nominal part against him, and (if operations were carrying on against him by other Powers) perhaps to blockade his ports with such ships as might happen to be in the Mediterranean.

I am far from undervaluing even a co-operation of this nature.

From what I have heard from a person on whom I can depend,

who has lately left Naples, Murat is supported by a large proportion of the nobility, but he is very unpopular with the people. They have no reason to hate him, for his government is a mild one ; but they are ashamed of him ; and as I know the English have always been particularly popular in Naples, and are so at this time, I have no doubt that a simple declaration on our part against him would make considerable impression upon the country. We must recollect, however, on the other hand, that he has an army which is not to be despised, and that his force, whatever it may be, is the more formidable from the discontented and inflammable state of a great part of Italy.

I am not insensible to all the inconvenience of his remaining on the throne of Naples ; but I am convinced, on the other hand, that it will be most hazardous and inexpedient to attempt to drive him from it by force, unless the force is of so commanding a nature as to place the accomplishment of the object out of all doubt, and to secure it in the shortest practicable period from the time it is undertaken.

You will hear, of course, further from Lord Castlereagh on this subject when he has received my letter ; but I was unwilling to delay putting you in possession of my general sentiments as at present informed upon it.

The employment of a British army for the purpose I consider as quite hopeless.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

Lord Liverpool's scruples can hardly be pronounced unseasonable or excessive. That Austria had agreed, on certain conditions, to guarantee Murat the secure possession of the territories and dignity which Napoleon had conferred on him, and that, to a certain extent, we had subsequently made ourselves a party to that agreement, was undeniable. And, though he was suspected of having played a double part, it was far from certain that any proof of his duplicity was attainable, while his outward and manifest actions indicated a resolution to remain faithful to his engagements. Under such circumstances

Lord Liverpool might well doubt the possibility of obtaining the sanction of Parliament for the employment of active measures against him ; and even the propriety of such an enterprise had it been more popular. And it might have been expected that Louis, from his long residence in this country, would have appreciated the importance of the Parliamentary difficulty. He was, however, so far from doing so, that immediately on hearing of the Peace of Ghent he had written a letter to Talleyrand, in which he had assumed it as a proposition to be taken for granted that the chief advantage which we had gained from that treaty was the ability to employ the forces set free by the cessation of the Transatlantic war in "ensuring the tranquillity of Europe on the only solid foundation, namely, that of equity," by uniting with him in driving Murat from Italy.<sup>1</sup> And in the course of January M. de Blacas, his Prime Minister, tried to shame us into such a line of conduct by declaring to the Duke of Wellington that, if we should decline to co-operate, France would undertake the enterprise by herself. Each day, however, the feeling manifested in England rendered it more impossible for our Government to combine with France for such a purpose ; and a few days after the meeting of Parliament this, with his other causes of anxiety, was fully detailed by Lord Liverpool to Lord Castlereagh in a letter that he sent to meet him at Paris, which the latter took in his way from Vienna to London, in order to explain the whole position of the Ministry to Louis in a private conference :

*Private and confidential.*

Fife House, 20th February, 1815.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

I have received your letter from Vienna of the 6th inst., and have been very glad to find that you had determined to return to England through Paris. Your audience of the King of France

<sup>1</sup> Talleyrand communicated the letter in confidence to Lord Castlereagh, who forwarded it to Lord Liverpool.



may be productive of many advantageous effects, and may at this moment be particularly useful in smoothing difficulties on the Neapolitan question.

I have already fully communicated to you, and to the Duke of Wellington, the sentiments of our Government upon that point. You will not have been three days in London before you are convinced of the absolute impracticability of our engaging in any military operations for the purpose of driving Murat from the throne of Naples. The truth is, the country at this moment is peace mad. Many of our best friends think of nothing but the reduction of taxes and low establishments, and it is very doubtful whether we could involve the country in a war at this moment for objects which, on every principle of sound policy, ought to lead to it.

This, like all other popular sentiments in a country such as ours, will wear out ; but, after such a contest for twenty years, we must let people taste something of the blessings of peace before we can expect fairly to screw them up to a war spirit, even in a just cause.

I am fully sensible of all the inconveniences of leaving Murat on the throne of Naples, and enter into all the personal feelings of the King of France on that subject ; but I think, for his own interest, and for that of the French nation, his Majesty ought to consider well before he embarks in military operations for the purpose of expelling Murat : any attempt of this sort might be fatal to the Bourbons in France if it failed of success, and should be made therefore with such an overpowering force as to render resistance hopeless. But is it certain that a French army could be trusted on this service ? I know there are many persons attached to the Bourbons who are of opinion that the greater part of such an army would desert if opposed to Murat, especially if there were any prospect of Murat being joined by Buonaparte. This opinion, whether true or false, cannot at least be regarded as improbable, when the spirit which is known to actuate so large a part of the French army is taken into the account ; and ought to be most seriously weighed by the King of France and his ministers before they embark in an undertaking which must, at all events, be extremely hazardous.

I should have the less difficulty in bringing these considerations under the serious view of the French Government, as I have no scruple in avowing that the keystone of all my external policy is the preserving the Bourbons on the throne of France. I am satisfied that this alone can prevent the recurrence of the evils which we have suffered for the last twenty years, and that all other dangers may be regarded as contemptible when compared with those which would arise out of another revolution in France.

I am happy to find that, with the exception of this question of Naples, you will have been able to have brought all the material points to a conclusion before you left Vienna.

We shall on this side of the water, I hope, have fairly launched our Finance and Corn questions before your arrival; and it is of the utmost importance that we should be able, if possible, to carry them both through Parliament before Easter.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

Before, however, the Congress broke up, proof of Murat's treachery and secret dealings with his kinsman at Elba were obtained, which, in the judgment of our Cabinet, fully exonerated Britain, and even Austria, from any obligation to uphold him against one who had a more legitimate right to the Neapolitan crown. Yet so difficult was it to reconcile the different conflicting interests in Europe, that Murat, aided in the first place by the circumstance that he was in actual possession of the kingdom which he desired to keep, and secondly by the want of ability or character which was conspicuous in the more lawful sovereign, would probably have succeeded in retaining his throne with the tacit acquiescence even of those who most wished to see him dispossessed of it, and who were most clearly convinced of the justice of expelling him, had he not marred his own chance, and offended and alienated all the allies, and him the most who was most bound to him by formal engagements, the Emperor Francis, first by irrational arrogance and pretensions, and afterwards by still more

irrational tergiversation, and a wanton display of hostility to the very Power on whose influence his safety principally depended.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On Napoleon's escape from Elba Austria offered to procure Murat the recognition by all the sovereigns at Vienna of his right to the throne of Naples if he would declare for the allies. But, as will be seen in the course of the narrative, instead of doing so he crossed the Po at the head of his army, issued a proclamation calling on all the Italians to join him in asserting the independence of Italy, and ten days afterwards was defeated by the Austrian generals at Tolentino, from which he fled to Toulon, and offered his services to Napoleon, while Ferdinand returned unopposed to Naples and resumed his throne.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Violence of the Czar—Opinion of the Prince Regent—Treaty between Britain, France, Austria, and Bavaria—A British force is sent to the Netherlands—Buonaparte leaves Elba—Reunion of all the allies—Completion of the territorial arrangements—Erection of the kingdom of the Netherlands—Present feeling against small states—Murat demands of Austria a passage for his army—He attacks the Austrians; is defeated and flies to France—Negotiations about the Slave-trade—Steadiness of Lord Liverpool on the subject—Foreign Powers are inclined to promise a gradual abolition—The Duke of Wellington succeeds Lord Castlereagh at Vienna—Vehe-  
mence of the Opposition in Parliament—Unpopularity of the Property tax—Financial arrangements for the year—Corn-law riots—History of the Corn-laws—New Corn-law—Lord Liverpool's speech on the second reading—Debate on the Catholic question—Willingness of the Roman Court to give the King a veto on ecclesiastical appointments—Discussions on the renewal of the war—Lord Wellesley's attack on Lord Castlereagh—Lord Liverpool's reply—Napoleon writes to the Prince Regent—Lord Grey opposes the renewal of the war—Breach between him and Lord Grenville—Lord Liverpool's speech—Reflections on the debate—Lord Castlereagh's over-great liberality to the Netherlands—Difference between the position of a Prime Minister and a leader of the Opposition.

THE new year did not at first bring the questions in dispute at Vienna nearer to a solution. The knowledge indeed that we were reconciled to our enemies beyond the Atlantic, and were consequently again able to exert our undiminished strength in Europe, produced a great effect on some of the ministers of the allies, and especially on those least friendly to us, Hardenberg and Humboldt; and on the 2d of January Lord Castlereagh wrote to Lord

Liverpool that he believed those two ministers would now be willing to "treat about Saxony," or, in other words, to content themselves with a portion instead of demanding the whole of that kingdom; but while the King was present they had but little influence, and no authority. Frederic William was still following the lead of the Czar with the most abject submission; and the chief effect which our improved condition had upon Alexander was only to make him more zealous in intriguing against us, seeking to gain France over to his side by the most transparent duplicity and falsehood, which however wholly failed to impose on Talleyrand, who, even if he had not been, as he was, fully and accurately informed of his previous conduct, would certainly have had penetration sufficient to discover his insincerity and artifice.

To a man as wary as the Frenchman the very multiplicity of the Czar's projects and proposals seemed an indication of shallowness of intellect, rather than of any statesmanlike grasp of mind. Some of the documents on which his Majesty had expended the greatest care, and on which he most piqued himself, Talleyrand characterised as "apparently the work of a mad freemason."

And, as he took no pains to disguise from his Imperial Majesty himself the suspicions which he entertained of his real feelings and designs, Alexander was mortally offended; insulted him; reviled Louis for ingratitude; spoke openly of a wish to see him driven from the throne on which he claimed the merit of having placed him; on more than one occasion proclaiming his readiness for instant war, and compelling the King of Prussia to re-echo his menaces. One of the Prussian generals even wrote a blustering letter to a British officer under pretence of fulfilling an old promise of giving him confidential information,<sup>1</sup> in which

<sup>1</sup> The writer of this letter was General Müffling, and his British correspondent, Sir Hudson Lowe, very properly thought that his duty required him to communicate the letter to the ministers, by whom it was forwarded to the Prince Regent; and his comment on it is interesting

he announced to him that a large Russian division was about to be sent back from France to the right bank of the Rhine, and that its line of march would enable it at the shortest notice to operate either in Saxony or in the heart of Germany; in other words, against Vienna. But the threat of war was so encountered that it only served to show the consciousness of the threateners of their inability to wage it with success. The British Cabinet took their measures with promptitude and energy; with the sanction of his colleague and chief Lord Castlereagh concluded a treaty with Austria, France, and Bavaria, binding each Power to support the other, even should it be necessary to employ half a million of men: and we displayed our

as showing both the shrewd judgment which his Royal Highness could bring to the examination of a political question when he chose to apply himself to business, and also the inclination of his mind to firmness and resolution. I subjoin his letter to Lord Bathurst, who in Lord Castlereagh's absence was discharging the formal duties of the Foreign Office:

“Brighton, February 5th, 1815.

“DEAR BATHURST,

“I return you Lowe's letter; and if you wish to have my sentiments upon the contents of it, I will give them to you in these words. In the first place, it seems to me quite clear that the letter was intended to be forwarded and shown here. And secondly, it appears to me equally evident that this partial movement of the Prussian army is a complete *ruse* to hold out *in terrorem* to us other consequences which may ensue, as they have at length discovered that of which they had not been informed before from being no parties to it, namely, our late private treaty; and that therefore pique and resentment at this, as well as the hope of inspiring a general feeling of terror throughout Europe at the slightest possibility of any renewal of warfare, has dictated this very impolitic and unjustifiable measure. I am quite persuaded that holding our heads very high, a resolute, firm, and steady line of conduct, as well as a bold tone in our language towards them at this moment, will render the whole of this plan of theirs abortive, and secure to us that becoming conciliation and submission on their parts which nothing else I am sure can accomplish. Adieu. In haste,

“Always most sincerely yours,

“GEORGE P. R.”

readiness to perform our part of the contract by at once sending over to the Continent several regiments to the Netherlands, whose presence eventually proved of signal utility in a very different contest.

A treaty of such a nature could hardly be kept secret from those whom it was intended to thwart; and, as the different parties to it were certainly not desirous to be compelled to carry it out, if they could attain its objects by more peaceful means, they were probably not unwilling that its conclusion and general purport should reach the ears of Alexander and his ally, when it might be expected to exert a moral coercion often not less efficacious than physical compulsion. And their expectations were in a great measure realized. Russia began to withdraw her claims to some of the districts of Poland which Austria was least inclined to see in her power, while Prussia admitted that such concessions on the part of Russia diminished her pretensions to demand the whole of Saxony. On this footing, which thus at last gave promise of an amicable solution of all difficulties, the discussions between the different diplomatists were continued during February, when they were suddenly brought to a close by a renewal of aggression on the part of him in whose overthrow they originated. On the 26th of that month Napoleon left Elba and crossed over to the French coast, at the head of no greater force than his staff and a battalion of his Old Guard, who had accompanied him to his new abode ten months before, but never doubting that he should find veterans of his army ready to join him in numbers sufficient to overturn Louis and to replace him on the throne. On this point his anticipations proved correct; but, when he fancied that some of the allies would be disposed to acquiesce in his reassumption of a power which they had already found so formidable, he fatally deceived himself. He flattered himself he should be throwing among them a torch of dissension sufficient to kindle into a bursting flame the embers of mutual dissatisfaction, the existence

of which was no secret to him or to any one. He proved a minister of reconciliation ; each, in the presence of the greater danger of the revival of his universal and intolerable despotism, abandoning overweening pretensions, forgetting mutual jealousies, and terminating all disputes by a fresh and, at least for the time, cordial alliance against the common enemy. In a few days every question of territory was settled : Alexander did indeed obtain the greater part of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, but another, and that not an inconsiderable portion was given to Prussia ; while the King of Saxony, instead of being stripped of all his dominions as his northern neighbours had desired, was visited for his adhesion to Napoleon with no heavier penalty than the loss of two or three provinces, which, from their position, were of more value to Russia in a military point of view than to himself for their contributions to his revenue. Another part of the arrangements carried out a project which Mr. Pitt had previously recommended, and which indeed had been contemplated more than two hundred years before by Elizabeth and Henry IV. The Netherlands and Holland were united, and created into a monarchy under the sovereignty of the Prince of Orange ; but this proved in the end to be the least permanent of the arrangements now made, as from the first it was the least promising. It was not only that a difference of religion divided the Protestant Dutch from the Catholic Belgians, but that these latter had conceived an attachment to French principles, and to the whole system of French government, which made them view with the greatest repugnance any measure which could tend to perpetuate their separation from France even when no longer under the sway of the revolutionary authority which had first united them to their powerful neighbour. As a Frenchman described them to one of Wellington's aides-de-camp, Lord Fitzroy Somerset (who thought his communication of sufficient importance to transmit it at once to the Prime Minister), "*Ces gens-là sont plus Français que nous-mêmes.*" "And those who



before detested France and everything belonging to it, now regret bitterly their separation from that country, and are perpetually projecting a revolution, which he [Lord F.'s informant] considers inevitable unless the greatest precautions are taken to prevent it. Moreover, the inhabitants of the one country entertain an active correspondence with those of the other; and it is admitted that, though the French Government is at this moment no party to such proceedings, yet hereafter it may not dislike to gain the addition of so fine a country to its Crown by a spontaneous movement of the people." On this question, however, he did not understand the French themselves to be unanimous. To quote some further sentences from the same letter, which was written in the last week of January, Talleyrand was believed "to regard the late possession of Belgium as detrimental to France, as from its vicinity to the mouths of the rivers, and its numerous canals, it attracted the most active and enterprising merchants to reside there, and thus became enriched while it diminished the trade in France. It is, however," he continues, "the general feeling of the army, and particularly of the superior officers, that Belgium should belong to France; and it is probable that many of these exert themselves to encourage the disposition which appears to exist there."

It is not strange that an union which began under such difficulties should not have been lasting. And the very disruption of it which took place fifteen years later is not unlikely to lead hereafter to the complete realization of the views of those who looked forward to the permanent annexation of Belgium to France; such an impulse have recent events given to the idea which was more than once broached at the Congress, that the separate existence of petty states is in itself an evil, and that those whose independence is owing not to their own strength, but to the active support or acquiescent indifference of others, are in a better condition as regards their own real interests, their security, and the develop-

ment of their resources, when annexed to or absorbed into some mightier kingdom, while Europe at large is a gainer by the removal of a possible cause of future dissension. Murat's own folly, as has been already intimated, relieved the allies from all difficulties on the score of Naples. In the middle of February he addressed a ridiculous demand to the Austrian ministers, that they should allow him, with an army of 80,000 men, a passage through their territories. He avowed his object to be to attack France, with which Austria was at the moment most closely allied; and it is probable that his demand had been suggested by Napoleon, then occupied with his preparations for the enterprise which he executed at the end of the month. But when Metternich, though little suspecting on what co-operation he in fact relied, as a matter of course refused his request, not without indicating his opinion that the mere act of preferring it was an offence against all the allies, he openly increased his warlike preparations, and, as soon as he learnt that Napoleon was re-established at Paris, turned his arms against the Austrians themselves, and invaded their Italian dominions.<sup>1</sup> The war scarcely

<sup>1</sup> De Bourrienne, than whom few were better informed of the secret motives of the chief actors, affirms that Murat was throughout acting in bad faith towards the allies, and in concert with Napoleon. His words are: "Ce fut au mois de février, pendant que tout se disposait à l'île d'Elbe pour le prochain départ de Bonaparte, que Murat demanda à la cour de Vienne l'autorisation de faire passer par ses provinces de la Haute Italie une armée dirigée sur la France; et ce fut le 26 du même mois que Bonaparte s'échappa de l'île d'Elbe. Ces deux faits ont nécessairement une grande liaison entre eux. . . . Associé de nouveau à la cause de Napoléon qu'il avait trahie l'année précédente, Murat vit clairement que le repos de l'Europe allait être troublé de nouveau; qu'une guerre générale ne tarderait pas à éclater, . . . ainsi laissant son royaume sans défense il exposait son royaume à être envahi au premier débarquement de quelques milliers d'hommes, et cela pour s'avancer à la tête de toutes ses troupes pour attaquer la maison d'Autriche. Peut-on croire que Murat, malgré son insuffisance, aurait agi de la sorte s'il n'eût compté d'avance sur une puissante diversion et

lasted a week: he was defeated in two actions; his army was dispersed; and he himself fled to the nearest French port, from whence he offered his personal services to his brother-in-law, only to find them rejected with disdain, though subsequently there were moments in which Napoleon regretted the precipitation and asperity with which he had repulsed the most brilliant of his cavalry officers.

On one subject, not connected with territorial arrangements, nor with the aggrandizement of any particular kingdom, but most intimately with the national feeling, and it may almost be said with the honour, of England, the efforts of our diplomatists were rewarded with a success which, though not complete nor immediate, was very considerable; and that it was not entire was owing to no want of zeal or ability on the part of our negotiators, with whose exertions even Wilberforce confessed himself satisfied.<sup>1</sup> The mention of the name of that remarkable man will of itself suggest that the subject of our negotiations was the Slave-trade. By the absolute devotion of all his abilities, which, especially as a speaker, were very considerable, and by the influence of a character of singular disinterestedness and purity, Wilberforce had so completely won over Parliament to share his feelings on that subject, that in the preceding year not one voice had been raised in opposition to a motion which he brought forward for an address to the Prince Regent, entreating him to direct his ministers to avail themselves of the opportunity afforded by the remarkable posture of the affairs of Christendom, when almost everything was open for discussion and settlement, as if a new era of the world were to be inaugu-

sur le secours que lui avait promis Napoléon?"—*Mémoires*, X. xvii. 290—292.

<sup>1</sup> "March 8th.—Called on Castlereagh by appointment to hear his narrative of Vienna proceedings on abolition. I believe all done that could be done."—*Life of Wilberforce*, iv. 244.

rated, by "employing every proper means to obtain a convention of the Powers of Europe for the immediate abolition of the Slave-trade." Of late years the war and our maritime supremacy had practically extinguished it; and therefore it seemed possible that even those nations which did not acknowledge its iniquity might be induced to forbid the revival of a practice which they would not have felt the duty of prohibiting while it was being actively carried on. His motion had been seconded by the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and, in accordance with it, instructions were given to our plenipotentiaries and ambassadors, and most especially to Lord Castlereagh at Vienna and the Duke of Wellington at Paris, to press in the strongest manner our most amicable entreaty on our allies to adopt our policy on this question. To ordinary apprehension it would have seemed that the British people could make such an appeal to any other people with peculiar advantage. If the Slave-trade was a traffic advantageous to merchants in general, we enjoyed a commerce by far more extensive and various than any other country. If it was necessary for the proper cultivation and prosperity of the West Indies, we again possessed a colonial dominion exceeding that of all the other kingdoms of Europe put together. If loss, therefore, were to be the consequence of abolition, there was no kingdom on which such loss would fall so heavily as on that of Britain. Moreover, it was not any sudden and unreasoning enthusiasm which had made our statesmen and senators so unanimous in the cause. When first he brought the question forward, it may almost be said that Wilberforce himself could hardly obtain a hearing. Nor had he, as we have seen, had a more resolute or plausible opponent than the present Prime Minister. It is greatly to the credit of Lord Liverpool's candour and courage that he had subsequently confessed the erroneousness of his early sentiments; and, though the general sobriety of his judgment

and temper prevented him from yielding to the transports of indignation by which Wilberforce was at times carried away, when his hopes of complete success were baffled or delayed by the selfish though mistaken covetousness of those whom he was endeavouring to convince, his efforts to put an end to the loathsome traffic were as zealous now as if he had never doubted the policy of such interference. They were perhaps even more to be relied on in their steadiness, because they were dictated by deliberate consideration, rather than by youthful enthusiasm; and certainly they were not less likely to attain their object for being guided by a moderation and conciliatory consideration for the foreign supporters of the trade, which none could mistake for uncertainty or vacillation. Both his personal opinions and the price which as the chief minister of the kingdom he was prepared to pay for a concession which all his countrymen had now set their hearts on obtaining are fully portrayed in some of his letters to the two envoys whom the posts which they were filling rendered his principal agents.

The obstacles which each encountered, or, in other words, the motives which influenced those sovereigns who avowedly clung to the traffic, were different in their kind. Some potentates firmly believed it to be a source of riches with which their subjects could ill afford to dispense. Some, who felt their pecuniary interests less concerned in its maintenance, were unwilling to change or extinguish a practice from which at least they received no injury. Some were, perhaps unconsciously, worked upon by a latent jealousy of the influence which we were exercising in every quarter, and unwilling to seem to follow our lead even in a matter on which they were personally almost indifferent. And both these latter feelings had Wellington found arrayed against him while pressing the demand of his Cabinet on the restored King of France. Wilberforce wrote to Lord Liverpool that

“he was convinced, from the accounts he received of the state of mind of the leading men in France, (he included the King’s in the number,) that the fear of wounding the national pride was the most powerful of all the principles which prevented the consent of the French Government to the proposal for an immediate abolition; and if they could have some fair producible excuse for having acceded to our wishes; in short, if, to speak plainly, we would buy it of them by some adequate cession, he had no doubt of their assenting to the bargain.” And he forwarded at the same time a narrative of an interview which Mr. Clarkson (next to himself the most prominent and energetic member of the Abolition Society) had had with the Duke of Wellington, in which the Duke had given him an account of some conversations which he had held with King Louis himself on the subject. “The King had told the Duke that the French people were very ignorant of the subject of the Slave-trade; and also very indifferent about it; but that the merchants speculated upon rich harvests, and the planters upon the enlargement of their estates. Others promised themselves gain from breaking up new land and stocking it with negroes. These were the persons with whom he should have to contend, and they were altogether a powerful body. All these considered the question of the abolition when mentioned to them as an English and not as a French question. Here then great difficulties would lie. They would complain loudly, and the other French people, hearing them, and not having any knowledge of the subject like the English people, would perhaps side with them, though indifferent at present. The King saw no way of opposing such as had formed expectations of gain from the traffic but through the medium of public opinion: he said emphatically, ‘He could no more give up the trade after it had been once promised, against popular opinion, than the King of England could continue it against popular opinion.’ But

the Duke thought that his Majesty would have no objection to find a current strong enough to enable him to abolish the trade. And he conceived that there would be no difficulty in getting a very considerable extent of coast entirely freed from the trade.'"

The Duke, however, was not quite so sanguine as Mr. Clarkson represented him to be. To educate the public opinion of any people on a subject on which they either feel no personal interest, or conceive what interest they may have in the matter to be adverse to the view to which it is desired to bring them, must be a work of time. And he absolutely disbelieved in the practicability of Mr. Wilberforce's scheme for buying the consent of the French Government by any cession, such as that of a West Indian island. He was willing, of course, to try the effect of such a proposal if the ministers desired; and accordingly wrote to Lord Liverpool on the subject, and received the following answer :

*Private.*

Fife House, 7th September, 1814.

MY DEAR DUKE,

I have received your letter of the 2d instant, on the subject of the communication made to you by Mr. Clarkson respecting the Slave-trade. I enclose copies of two letters, one from Mr. Wilberforce to myself, and the other from Mr. Clarkson to the Duke of Gloucester, to the same effect. The information respecting the proposition of the French Government you will see comes from the same source. I am strongly inclined to believe it to be erroneous, for I cannot conceive that, in the confidential communications which have passed on the subject between yourself and the King, as well as between Lord Castlereagh and his Majesty, he would not fairly have explained himself in this way to both of you, if such had been his feelings and sentiments.

I think it unlike the King of France to convey this idea circuitously, instead of doing it directly, particularly when he was so anxious to have a confidential explanation on all points of

difficulty with Lord Castlereagh. I must further add that I believe the reason actually given by the King of France against the immediate abolition of the Slave-trade to be the true one, viz. that he must manage the prejudices and feelings of his own people: the West India body are the only commercial body in France that have ever had any considerable political influence, and they are now very powerful in both the Assemblies, but particularly in the House of Peers. With them the question is not one of *pride*, but of *interest*, and it would be no satisfaction to them that France should acquire another colony, if they were denied the means of cultivating their estates in the old colonies.

When I state these doubts as to the truth of the information, I am well aware that every due attention ought to be paid to it. The question of the abolition of the Slave-trade is become so embarrassing that it would be expedient to purchase it by some sacrifice, and perhaps even prudent to be enabled to say that we have offered the sacrifice, though it should be refused.

The objection to offering to cede an island for the abolition is obviously this, that, when the principle is once admitted, where are we to stop? Mr. Wilberforce and his friends evidently think that the abolition of the Slave-trade is not only worth *one* island, but that it is worth anything and everything. The French Government, when once they knew that we were ready to negotiate upon the principle of cession, would endeavour to make us pay, not what we were ready to give, but what they were ready to ask, and we should be exposed to considerable difficulties in the refusal.

Notwithstanding these considerations, however, we are willing to make the attempt.

If the French Government are disposed to abolish the Slave-trade for the cession of an island, would they not abolish it for a sum of money, part of which might be advanced to the West India planters themselves, to repair their losses, and to set their concerns properly afloat?

Would not a sum of money be a greater benefit to the planters than the continuance of the trade for only five years, when they must be so totally in want of capital?

I have no difficulty in authorising you to offer two millions



sterling for this purpose, if you should think it likely to be effective: we might perhaps even go as far as three millions.

If you should be of opinion that so liberal an offer of money for this object would not be accepted, we might then reconcile ourselves to the cession of the island of Trinidad, as the condition of the immediate abolition.

We have fixed upon Trinidad rather than upon St. Lucia, because it is an island not necessary for the security of our ancient possessions. St. Lucia is of the utmost importance to us as long as the French possess Martinique and the Saintes. It is the protection, in fact, of our Leeward Islands. France does not want it, for she has a naval station both at Martinique and at the Saintes; we have none in those seas if we give up St. Lucia. We placed in our negotiation for peace the retention of Mauritius and St. Lucia, not on the ground of acquisition, but of security, and we can now best resist the cession of them for the abolition of the Slave-trade on the same grounds. Trinidad is at least worth double the value of St. Lucia, has one of the finest harbours in the world, is not exposed to hurricanes, and is close to the coast of South America. No one could say, therefore, that it would not be a most liberal offer, and one that would be flattering to the pride of the French nation.

I have the less indisposition personally to make the offer of this cession, as we intend to retain Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice.

A grant, however, of money would be far preferable to cession of dominion, and I think might be as acceptable to the French Government. If the French West India planters really believe that their Government will abolish the trade at the end of five years, I cannot but think that they would prefer a large sum of money to a temporary continuance of the trade.

I have thus stated to you fully my sentiments, and those of my colleagues who are in town, upon this subject. You will judge best of the use you can make of them.

I shall send a copy of this letter to Lord Castlereagh. The offer of money, if otherwise expedient, might be made without any previous communication with him. You might perhaps wish to communicate with him before you made the offer of the cession

of Trinidad. There will be this advantage in having made both the offers, even if they should be refused, that I think no reasonable person could then say that we have not done everything in our power for the accomplishment of the complete abolition of the Slave-trade.

If an arrangement should be made upon the basis of either of these propositions, it would of course be essential that the stipulations to effect the abolition should be in all respects satisfactory, and that the French Government should unite their efforts with ours to procure the abolition by other states.

Believe me to be, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

P.S. Of course no intimation will be given to Mr. Wilberforce or any of his friends that there is an intention on the part of the Government to agree to the cession of any colony to France for the abolition of the Slave-trade.

*To the DUKE OF WELLINGTON.*

Lord Liverpool, as is seen from the above letter, though he would have preferred giving money to ceding an island, was willing to make either or almost any sacrifice to obtain the desired end. It must be admitted that, independently of the conviction at which he had arrived, that religion and humanity demanded the abolition of the traffic, he had personal reasons for wishing either to succeed, or at least to prove to the Abolitionists that he had left no stone unturned to obtain success, in the degree in which the knowledge of such exertions on his part might be expected to weaken the hostility of the Opposition, who (as we have already seen), as he was well aware, were preparing to attack him and his colleagues with renewed bitterness in the coming session. And the inconsistent language which some of the Whig leaders held on this very subject was calculated to awaken a suspicion that they were not unwilling to embarrass the settlement even of it, if by so doing they could at the same time make it a weapon with which to attack the Administration. Mr. Clarkson, in the same letter in which he reported his

interview with the duke, gave an account of a conversation which he had with Lord Holland on the same subject, in which that nobleman affirmed to him that "Talleyrand had called upon him several times, and he upon Talleyrand. He had lost no opportunity of talking on the subject of the Slave-trade ; and told Clarkson positively that Talleyrand was not hostile towards giving up the whole trade immediately, nor was the French Government. We might have the whole abolition when we pleased, if we were serious in asking for it, and would give something in exchange." Yet, almost at the same moment that Lord Holland was thus exciting the leaders of the Abolitionists to believe that the attainment of their object depended solely on the sincerity of the ministers, he was avowing to the Duke of Wellington his belief that "nothing but a conviction that it was her commercial interest would induce France to concur cordially in the measure."

According to the Duke's report to Lord Liverpool,<sup>1</sup> Talleyrand's account of his language to Lord Holland on the subject differed materially from that given by the English peer. He affirmed that he had positively denied the existence of any inclination on the part of the French Government to abolish the trade entirely and immediately. And, from his tone on the subject, Wellington had been so convinced of the impossibility of carrying his point that he had not thought it worth while even to hint at the idea of any especial concession. Lord Liverpool replied in the following letter :

*Private and confidential.*

Fife House, 23d September, 1814.

MY DEAR DUKE,

I have received your letter of the 13th inst., with an account of your conversation with Monsieur de Talleyrand on the subject of the Slave-trade.

The result of it is very much what I expected, though I cannot avoid saying that it was very unfair in Talleyrand (knowing as

<sup>1</sup> See his letter in the Supplementary Despatches, ix. 284.

he did all our embarrassment on this question) to say even as much as he admits himself to have said to Lord Holland upon it; and, though I have no doubt that Lord Holland in his zeal exaggerated what passed on the occasion, yet I think it very probable that Talleyrand said more than he now avows.

Upon considering the matter thoroughly, I do think, however, that, especially after what has passed, it would be desirable to have some producible record that we had offered to France a pecuniary compensation, or an island, for the immediate abolition of the Slave-trade. Some such proposition is certainly expected by the Abolitionists. These expectations have been encouraged by the report of the disposition of the French Government to listen to it; and, unless the attempt is made in some shape in which it can be shown that it has been made and rejected, I am apprehensive that we shall not stand well with many of our friends. I have the less disinclination to the offer of an island for this object, since it has been determined to retain Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice. These settlements are most valuable to us, not only as they are occupied almost exclusively by British proprietors, but likewise as they contain the principal cotton establishments in America, for the use of our manufactures.

The retention of them will, however, add in some degree to the colonial jealousy which exists on the Continent of Great Britain; and I have reason to believe that the planters and merchants interested in the settlements in question did not expect that we should keep them. Under these circumstances I think we can afford to offer a West India colony for the accomplishment of an object which the nation has certainly so much at heart. I would offer none but a West India colony, and I have already stated to you my reasons for preferring to offer Trinidad.

I think it a question, however, whether in the first instance it would be necessary to state either the amount of money or the particular colony we were prepared to give up.

The proposition might be confined to the principle in the first instance, and, if that was formally rejected, we could not be called upon to go into details. I should only wish, for the reasons already stated, that, if the offer of a colony is made, the colony should be described as a West India colony.

It is likewise worth considering, whether under present circumstances such a proposition would better be made at Paris or at Vienna; and I wish upon this point you would communicate with Lord Castlereagh.

I am strongly inclined to the opinion that any attempt on the part of the French Government to recover the colony of St. Domingo by force or intimidation will prove abortive. I do not believe that the parties in the island will come over to any compromise with the French Government which is not founded upon the independence of the colony, and its right to trade with other countries as well as with France. I should be sorry on many accounts to see the French Government embark in the undertaking of acquiring St. Domingo by force, as I am persuaded they would lose character and credit by it.

If the Government and West India planters could once be brought to the conclusion that it was necessary to give up the recovery of St. Domingo as desperate, they might perhaps be led to think that they could not do better than renounce the Slave-trade for a new colony, or even for a pecuniary compensation.

Believe me, &c. &c.

LIVERPOOL.

On the same day he wrote also to Lord Castlereagh to suggest to him the propriety of endeavouring to induce those Powers at the Congress which had no personal interest in the maintenance of the trade to discountenance it by the introduction of new import regulations :

*Private and confidential.*

Fife House, 23d September, 1814.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

I received the copy of your letter to Sir Henry Wellesley. We had already instructed him to the same effect from hence. It would be obviously impossible to give the least countenance to the proposition for a Spanish loan without a stipulation for the total and immediate abolition of the Slave-trade.

I send you a copy of a letter which I have written this day to the Duke of Wellington in answer to one I received from him a

few days ago, a copy of which he has transmitted to you. I hope you will agree with us who are here in the expediency, under all the circumstances, of the proposition referred to in that letter. I am confident that it would allay a storm in this country, which we shall otherwise find it very difficult to weather, and that it may operate as a strong inducement to the continental Powers to concur in those measures for the same purpose, in which we should want their assistance.

Suppose the French Government to refuse our offer, we might then close with them upon that to which they have already agreed, the immediate abolition north of the Line, and the total abolition at the end of five years. This being settled between Great Britain and France, we might call upon the Powers at the Congress to agree to prohibit the importation of colonial produce into their respective dominions from any countries which had not become parties to this stipulation.

The offer of compensation, or of a West India colony, on our part to France, as the price of immediate abolition, would be the best proof of our sincerity, and might have the effect therefore of reconciling other Powers to measures to which they might otherwise be indifferent.

I cannot therefore avoid urging this view of the question upon your consideration. You will be the best judge how far the details of it can be managed in the first instance with most advantage at Paris or at Vienna.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

All attempts, however, to obtain more from the French than they had already agreed to grant entirely failed. The prejudices of the French people on the subject were not the less insurmountable for being ridiculous. The Duke of Wellington wrote to Wilberforce,<sup>1</sup> "that in the minds of many the proposition to abolish the trade was foolishly enough connected with other recollections of the Revolutionary days of 1789 and 1790, and was generally unpopular. Nor did they believe that we ourselves had abolished it on

<sup>1</sup> See his letters to Wilberforce, Despatches, xii. 115, 213.

the score of inhumanity, but rather to prevent the undue increase of colonial produce in our stores of which we could not dispose, and to prevent other nations from cultivating their colonies to the utmost of their power." In a subsequent letter he related that he himself "had been told by the Directeur de la Marine that one of our objects in abolishing the trade was to get recruits to fight our battles in America ; and it was hinted that a man might as well be a slave for agricultural labour as a soldier for life, and that the difference was not worth the trouble of discussing it." And, as this was the case, Lord Liverpool, before the end of the year, came to the decision which he thus announced to Lord Castlereagh :

Fife House, 9th December, 1814.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

We have received your despatch of the 21st ult.<sup>1</sup> on the subject of the Slave-trade. . . .

Upon the general question we have no difficulty in giving an opinion.

It is certainly desirable to endeavour to induce the Congress to adopt the measure of immediate abolition, and to have at least some record that the proposition to this extent had been brought before them. After the answer, however, which you have received from Prince Talleyrand of the 5th ult. there can exist little prospect of success as to the attainment at present of this object. It is very material that we should, if possible, join cordially with the French Government in this question ; and it is of the highest importance that we should not adopt any course which might lead that Government to make common cause with Spain and Portugal.

I am quite ready to admit that we should not perhaps be warranted, under all the circumstances, in driving the Spanish and the Portuguese Governments to extremities, by forcing them to go greater lengths than we have admitted as to France ; but I think we are fairly entitled to expect that they will go the same length, and that the most prejudicial consequences might

<sup>1</sup> This despatch is not to be found.

arise from protracting the continuance of the trade in their favour to a period which has been refused to the French Government.

By such a measure we should incur the risk of letting France loose from the engagement into which she has entered.

The French planters and merchants interested in the trade would say, with some degree of plausibility, "Why are we not to enjoy the advantages of the traffic for as long a period as Great Britain and the Powers at the Congress have granted to Spain and Portugal?"

We should not be dealing fairly by the King of France, who has acted, personally, very honorably towards us as to this question, who has many prejudices to encounter amongst his own subjects, and who has incurred some degree of unpopularity from being supposed to have yielded so far to the wishes of Great Britain.

We are therefore decidedly of opinion that we ought to insist with all the earnestness in our power upon the general adoption of the arrangement already agreed upon between Great Britain and France; that is, the total abolition of the Slave-trade at the end of five years, and the immediate abolition of it north of Cape Formosa.

If the Spanish and Portuguese Governments should decline acceding to this proposal, we should endeavour to induce the Congress to take the best means in their power for enforcing it, by the adoption of a law on the part of the several states to exclude the colonial produce of those countries who shall refuse to comply with this system of abolition.

If the instructions of the plenipotentiaries of Spain and Portugal should be limited, a reasonable interval might be allowed for them to signify their acquiescence, and the decision of the Congress; but it ought to be decided that the prohibitory system should take effect if, within the period specified, the acquiescence of the above-named Powers in the decision of the Congress was not signified according to some form to be agreed upon.

With respect to your proposal for establishing a committee of the Powers interested in the abolition, to be resident at Paris or in London, with a view of concerting the means necessary for



carrying into execution the decision of the Congress on this subject, we think it excellent, and are most desirous that it should be adopted. We think it likewise of very great importance that the respective Powers should agree materially to assist each other in carrying the abolition into effect, by authorising, under certain regulations, the search of ships on the coast of Africa ; but we are apprehensive that many difficulties will be made to an arrangement of this nature.

Whenever the trade shall have been abolished by all, or nearly all, the Christian states, it would be quite right that the Governments should come to some determination to consider those who might continue to engage in the traffic as guilty of an offence proscribed by civilized nations, and, as such, not to be peaceably tolerated.

Before I close this letter, I am anxious to enquire whether you have had the communication you intended with the Court of Rome on this question. I should conceive that the Pope might, without much difficulty, be induced to anathematize the trade, if he found he was likely to be supported by the Powers of Europe in general, assembled at the Congress. Such a proceeding could not fail to have considerable effect in the Roman Catholic countries, and would, I am inclined to believe (together with the measure of prohibiting colonial produce from countries engaged in the trade), effect the object we all have in view, at no very distant period.

Believe me to be, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

The greatest difficulty of all was certain to be with Spain and Portugal, since it was under their flags that the trade was most actively carried on. They were apparently more accessible to pressure from us than France, since Spain was negotiating with us for a considerable loan, and Portugal owed to us its very existence as a separate and independent nation, and still mainly relied on us for protection and support. But Spain did her best to evade coming to any specific agreement, and Portugal even indirectly

endeavoured to elude the obligations under which previous treaties had already placed her. Both were foiled, however, by the clear discernment and steadfast resolution of Lord Liverpool, who, on receiving their proposals, sent Lord Castlereagh the following instructions :

*Secret and confidential.*

Bath, January 6th, 1815.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

I have at last received the Portuguese memorandum on the subject of the Slave-trade. I never read so unreasonable a proposition in all its parts. I think you were right in proposing to indemnify them for the captured ships, provided they would agree to the immediate abolition of the Slave-trade north of the Line ; but I am convinced we ought not to go further in concession on this subject. Let the question be brought before Congress, and urge in every possible manner the adoption of the French rule. This is in fact the utmost latitude the addresses of the Houses of Parliament have given us ; and if the Congress will adopt it, and the principal states agree to enforce it by excluding colonial produce from those countries which will not agree to it, the measure will soon be successful.

The demand of eight years on the part of Portugal is inconceivable, as it is now seven years (if I mistake not) since they agreed to the stipulation in the commercial treaty gradually to abolish the trade, and no one step has ever been taken for that purpose. Under these circumstances Portugal can surely not ask in reason to be placed on a more favorable footing than France. You will recollect that Souza said last summer that to this extent he thought his Government would and ought to go, though no further.

As to the proposition of suspending the treaty of commerce, this might be agreed to upon the condition of Portugal consenting to the French terms in their full extent ; but it ought not to be conceded for any less favorable arrangement.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

The Congress at last was brought to so hurried a close that the whole matter was not completely settled at its dissolution ; but the path was so completely smoothed by the discussions which had taken place, and our resolution on the subject so clearly seen to be immovable, that what was left undone now was completed at no distant period. Two years later both Spain and Portugal fixed an early period for the abolition ; and the first year of George IV.'s reign saw the Slave-trade stamped with the character of piracy by every nation in Europe. And of the glory of this great triumph of humanity Lord Liverpool himself is entitled to no insignificant share. No one, indeed, can contest with Wilberforce the praise of having been both the first man to awaken the conscience of the nation to the sin of trafficking in human freedom and human life, and from the beginning to the end of the struggle the most untiring, the most eloquent, the most practically able advocate of abolition, of being in short the man to whom the adoption of that great measure was mainly due ; but, without detracting from his pre-eminent merit, it cannot in candour be denied that for that success no small credit, in a secondary degree, should be ascribed to the minister who so skilfully and so resolutely availed himself of every opportunity of enforcing his views, and who pressed the negro's right to protection against the foreign slave merchant, and even against his own native sovereign, who was often willing to sell him, as zealously as if he were insisting on the rights of Englishmen themselves.

The closing acts of the Congress at Vienna were not shared in or influenced by Lord Castlereagh. At the beginning of February he was replaced by the Duke of Wellington, and returned to London to be ready to play his part as the leader in the House of Commons, where fierce and angry debates were expected, and where, during the short autumnal session, his absence had been grievously felt by his colleagues, though, among the junior members of the Administration, one, Mr. Peel, had in consequence

found an opening which had been noticed by Lord Liverpool,<sup>1</sup> and had raised still higher the estimate that his chief had previously formed of his abilities, and of the services which, as a practical man of business and a ready debater, he was likely to render the Administration. Short as the session had been, it had been long enough to display the extreme bitterness of the Opposition. "They were determined," as Lord Liverpool reported to Lord Castlereagh, "to show no forbearance:" he therefore wrote letter after letter to him to beg him to return before Parliament reassembled: and when at the end of the year Lord Castlereagh, who naturally wished to remain at Vienna to complete in person the work which he had begun, urged that the conclusion of peace with America would render his presence in the House of Commons less necessary, he wrote again to assure him that that "made no difference. It might," he said, "appear extraordinary, but he could assure him that it was some years since he had seen party spirit and rancour exist in the same degree as they did then. He was sure that the conduct of the Government in the House of Commons would for some time be more difficult than during war. During a war so eventful as the last most minor questions merged in the great interest. Now every question might create a conflict; and it was of the greatest importance that the first impression should be favorable, and should inspire confidence. Ground once lost by Government on questions of importance in public opinion was not easily recovered." The battle was not likely to be confined to foreign politics. "It was quite astonishing how little interest was taken in what was going on at Vienna. . . . Very few persons seemed to give themselves any anxiety about what was passing there, except in as far as it was connected with expense." Nor was the animosity confined to Parliament, but "he understood that

<sup>1</sup> "Our friends *en première ligne* in the House of Commons have proved themselves not equal to the burden. . . The others have gained great credit, particularly Peel."—*Letter to Lord Castlereagh*, Jan. 12, 1815.

it appeared in the clubs and in private society." Expense, indeed, that is to say, the finance of the kingdom, was likely to be the main field of battle. And the debates on that subject must unavoidably come on at the beginning of the session. It was one with which Lord Castlereagh was so familiar that, as we have seen, he had formerly offered to take the post of Chancellor of the Exchequer; so that Lord Liverpool had reason to think his aid in discussing the financial policy of the year would be all important. The principal question was the continuance of the property tax, which the Ministry looked upon as almost indispensable, and which, it was no secret, would be bitterly assailed. The Houses had scarcely adjourned when Lord Liverpool wrote to Canning that it would be the subject of a great struggle. He himself was most anxious to maintain it, since, though "if peace continued substitutes might be found for it, none, in his judgment, could be so equal or so just; but he observed that many who had been praising the tax for the last three years as the greatest discovery in finance were now the most loud in disapproving and objecting to the continuance of it." And this feeling gained such strength that, even before Parliament reassembled, he wrote to Lord Castlereagh that "he feared they should be obliged to give up the property tax immediately; indeed, the current of opinion was so strong against it, that he did not think that they should have any chance of carrying it even for a year. It would be better, therefore, to endeavour to make the public pay for the relief they were to obtain by some very efficient measure which they might be able to carry in the first instance as the price of giving up the property tax, but which it might be very difficult to induce Parliament to adopt under other circumstances."

The view which he here intimated he eventually carried out. On the 9th of February, the day on which the Houses first met, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that, unless the Government of the United States should refuse

to ratify the Treaty of Ghent, he should abandon the property tax, and should endeavour to find other taxes more acceptable to the country by which he might meet the deficiency thus created. The general tenor of his financial arrangement was thus described by Lord Liverpool to our Ambassador at Lisbon :

*Private and confidential.*

Fife House, 6th January, 1815.

MY DEAR CANNING,

You will perhaps have learnt from others both the fate of the property tax and the decision of Government on the important subject of corn.

After all we recollect of the property tax, and the patient manner in which the country has submitted to it for so many years, I could not have conceived that so strong a prejudice could have been created against it ; but a variety of circumstances has operated very unfortunately with respect to this measure.

The farming interests throughout a great part of the country have suffered so considerably within the last few months, that it is very much doubted whether a large proportion of them could have paid their share of the tax. If we had once begun to modify it, there would have been no end to the difficulties in which we should have been involved. Indeed, even if the property tax was susceptible of modification upon any equitable principle, it must be obvious that we should have gone to the consideration of this question with every possible disadvantage, at a moment when so strong a prejudice existed against the principle of the tax itself, and when an idea was prevalent, however erroneously, that the faith of Parliament was pledged to its expiration on the 5th of April next. But it soon became quite clear that we had no chance of inducing Parliament to continue it for more than one year ; and, though this would have been a present relief to our financial measures, we should have been put to the same embarrassment about finding substitutes in the next session of Parliament ; and it was thought, therefore, that by meeting the feelings of the country upon the question at this time, we should find them better disposed than they might be a twelvemonth hence to consider fairly those taxes which it is indispensably necessary to impose upon the discontinuance of the property tax.

I will not now trouble you with the detail of the measures which Vansittart will propose in the Committee of Finance on Monday next. But, in order that you may have a general idea upon the subject, I will just state that he intends to propose as nearly as possible 5,000,000*l.* of taxes: viz. an increase of 80 per cent upon the assessed taxes of carriages, horses, and servants; a small addition to the house tax, but none to the window tax; an addition of about 800,000*l.* to the Stamps and Post Office, and about 400,000*l.* on wine; besides some other articles which are not yet quite settled, but will make up the difference.

These taxes, if they should pass, would fully defray the interest and sinking fund of any loans which it may be necessary to raise for the next four years; and in the spring of 1819 the sinking fund will have reached Mr. Pitt's maximum of a forty-fifth part of the National Debt; that is, it will pay off the whole National Debt at simple interest in forty-five years: from that time the accumulations of it will therefore be fairly at the disposal of the public, according to his principle, either for the purpose of peace establishment or of reduction of taxes.

This plan, you will see, involves the inconvenience of peace loans for a much longer period than could be desirable; but, if the property tax is taken off, there is no way by which this evil can be avoided; and the amount of the sinking fund, which in 1819 will be 15,000,000*l.*, will more than compensate any inconvenience which loans to a small extent can be expected to have on the money market. There are many who doubt whether the market will be able to bear so large a sinking fund as 15,000,000*l.* in time of peace. This, however, can only be ascertained by experience; and, till experience warrants a reduction of it, I should feel an insuperable objection to depart from the original principle laid down when the sinking fund was first established.

We have had several meetings of members of all parties on the subject of the Corn Laws,<sup>1</sup> and it is determined to take the

<sup>1</sup> It is a singular specimen of the unreasoning rancour of the Whigs at this time that Mr. Tierney, who, though not their ostensible leader, was certainly the man of the highest reputation among them for general ability in the House of Commons, made these meetings the

matter up as a question of Government. The country gentlemen in opposition, and the Irish, promise most cordial support. We do not propose to push the protecting price beyond 80s. per quarter, but we shall meet with serious opposition in going thus far. I am satisfied, however, that such a price is desirable, for the purpose of giving a proper stimulus to the agriculture of the country; and, if the measure should be adopted, I do not despair of the United Kingdom being able to feed itself in the course of a few years, except in very bad seasons. The deficiencies of Great Britain may certainly be made up from Ireland, if due encouragement is given to investing capital in agriculture in that country; and the measure will have the further advantage of civilizing and improving that part of the empire more rapidly and in a greater degree than any other project that could be devised.

I am happy to find that you have been enabled to lodge yourself so agreeably, and that you go on with such perfect harmony with Lord Beresford. Lord Bathurst will write to you by this packet, or the next, on pecuniary affairs. We have no intelligence whatever from the Brazils of Sir J. Beresford's arrival.<sup>1</sup>

Believe me yours, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

The intelligence, however, of the abandonment of the property tax had scarcely reached Portugal when the intention was rescinded, with the consent of all parties, under the compulsion of Napoleon's return, and the necessity for making instant provision of adequate means for the renewal of the war. But, even before that event, the discontent, with which the announcement of many of the

subject of an attack on Lord Liverpool. "He deemed it extremely unusual, and thought it highly objectionable, in a minister to send for a certain number of leading persons in both Houses, and ask them whether, if such a measure were framed in such a manner, he might rely on them for support. To him this appeared to be rather an unconstitutional kind of rehearsal."

<sup>1</sup> Lord Beresford's brother, Rear-Admiral Sir John Beresford, was in command of a squadron which, at the request of the Prince Royal of Portugal, had been sent to Rio Janeiro to escort him and his family back to Europe.



new taxes which were to be substituted for it was received, showed itself with such vehemence that, as will hereafter be seen, when the war was finally terminated, and Napoleon was disabled from again disturbing the peace of Europe, and when in consequence Mr. Vansittart had once more to provide for a peace establishment, he desired to return to the property tax as a preferable measure. The debate which arose then will afford a more suitable opportunity for considering the question ; but it may not be out of place here to remark that both the assaults on the tax on this occasion, and the opposition which was triumphant at a later day, came almost wholly from the party whose successors at the present day, though the objections founded on its inquisitorial nature and its inequality are as manifest and as valid as ever, would gladly see it both increased and perpetuated.

On the question of a new Corn Law which the Cabinet had framed, Lord Liverpool, as we see by his letter to Canning, expected serious opposition, more strenuous indeed than it received in either House of Parliament. The largest division against any of its clauses in the Commons did not exceed 78 ; the greatest number of Peers which voted against it was only 21. But a feeling that it would raise the bread excited the populace to most formidable disturbances and riots, both in the metropolis and in several rural districts. It was in London itself that the rioters proceeded to the greatest outrages, threatening to attack the Houses of Parliament themselves ; and, when they found the police force which had been collected for their defence too strong to be overpowered, venting their fury on the dwellings of several of the ministers, and on those members of either House whom they believed, not always correctly, to have been supporters of the bill. The existence of any tax whatever on the importation of corn was not more ancient than the year 1791, at which time a law was passed imposing a duty of 24*s.* 3*d.* on foreign wheat whenever the price in the home market was below 50*s.* a quarter ; when it was between 50*s.* and 54*s.*, the duty

was to fall to half-a-crown ; when above 54*s.*, to 6*d.* In 1804 the price of 63*s.* was substituted for that of 50*s.*, and 66*s.* for 54*s.* ; the duty affecting other species of grain in proportion to their inferior value. Under both these Acts great quantities of corn had been imported ; but the rise and fall in the price in this country had been beyond all former experience, and beyond the utmost variation that had been known in any other article of commerce. During the last twelve years wheat had been sold at 60*s.* 2*d.*, and at 128*s.* And, as so prodigious and most mischievous a fluctuation, causing distress to all but the richest classes, and the most severe distress to the poorest, was attributed to the great changes which a very small rise of price made in the duty, it was conceived that a bill which should raise the standard price and absolutely prohibit importation when wheat was cheaper would prevent such changes. Accordingly it was now proposed to fix 80*s.* as the price below which all importation should be forbidden ; while, if wheat were dearer, the importation should be free : and the proposal excited warm debates in both Houses. No member of either House, however, advocated an entirely free trade in corn. The battle was fought solely on the question whether the proposed protection was fixed at too high a limit ; those who argued that it was proposing to lower it, some by 4*s.*, others by 8*s.* Nor did any one obtain fewer supporters than Mr. Baring, who, though willing to support 75*s.* or 76*s.* for the existing year, coupled his consent with a condition that that price should be reduced by 2*s.* each year till it should have returned to the former limitation of 65*s.* The Government carried these measures in the House of Commons by overwhelming majorities, and early in March the bill reached the Peers. The opinions and motives of the Ministry, and especially of Lord Liverpool himself, on the subject will be best shown by a few quotations from the speech in which on the 15th he moved the second reading. After having asserted the "absolute freedom from all bias or prejudice" with which he had in

the first instance approached the question, and having protested against "any argument on the subject being drawn from the practice of small republics such as Holland, Genoa, and Venice, whose territory was too limited for them to trust for food to the produce of their own lands, and who had therefore inevitably looked to foreign countries for their supplies of grain," he proceeded to lay down as the foundation of his own policy the axiom that "a nation such as ours could not suffer itself to be dependent on foreign supplies for the necessities of life without the most palpable impolicy and the greatest danger. In the case of a nation whose wealth and power were founded partly on agricultural and partly on commercial industry, the obvious policy was to encourage both in a due proportion, and not to sacrifice the one to the other. He himself had been bred in a school where he had been taught highly to value the commercial interest, but still he must refuse to sacrifice to it the agricultural interest. While he said this, however, he wished carefully to guard against its being supposed that these interests were at all distinct from each other. On the contrary, he trusted that he should be enabled, before he sat down, to show to demonstration, that they were the same." The equality, or rather identity, of the two interests had never been conceived by any previous British statesman but Pitt, and the sudden interruption which his financial reforms had received from the war had prevented him from carrying out the theory in practice; so that though at the present day the assertion of it has the appearance of a truism, at the time it was thus affirmed to the Peers it had all the character of audacious novelty; and Lord Liverpool is certainly entitled to the credit of being the first to found a new policy on what at the moment was very nearly a new principle.

He proceeded to show that legislation on the subject was not the deliberate choice of the Ministry, but was rather forced on them by the policy of other nations and the circumstances of the world in general. And his

language on this part of the question proves him in such matters to have been far in advance of his age ; for thirty years elapsed before the principles which he enunciated found acceptance with any large party either in or out of Parliament. "The general principle, supposing all nations, or at least the most considerable nations, to act upon it, was that in these cases the Legislature ought not to interfere, but should leave everything to find its own level. In such a state of the world it was perfectly clear that every nation ought to be left to prosecute without interference that particular species of industry for which, by its nature and condition, it was in all respects best adapted. Each nation could then purchase whatever commodities it might require from those quarters where they could be raised and brought home at the cheapest rate and of the best quality. If that system were to be adopted by all the considerable nations of the world, there could be no doubt that it was the system which all must consider the most proper and desirable. But unfortunately the period was not yet arrived when nations would have the wisdom to act on any such system. Then, if such a system could not be pursued when considered in connexion with the regulations adopted by the several nations of the world, ought the principle to be acted upon by any individual nation, having regard to the different descriptions of industry presented within its own limits? That was a more doubtful question ; but this at least he took to be clear, that no nation could act upon this principle without exceptions. He admitted that these exceptions ought to be as few as possible, that the legislative regulations ought to be as limited as the situation and circumstances of the case would allow ; but still exceptions there must be. And, with respect to the system hitherto adopted by this country, he had only to request their Lordships to look at the Statute Book and see how numerous these exceptions were. The Legislature had been in the constant habit of interfering, and the plan had grown up and extended

through so many ramifications that it often became absolutely necessary to afford protection to one species of industry in order to prevent its falling a sacrifice to those descriptions of industry which otherwise would be more favored. If we were now about to begin on a new system, the course of legislation would in all probability be materially different; but these statutes had long been acted upon, and the condition of the country had in a great degree adapted itself to the system. Whatever might be their opinion of these measures if they had now been proposed for the first time, they must now take them as they stood, and legislate with a proper regard to the existing system considered in all its bearings and relations. That system had been to bolster up particular descriptions of industry by a variety of protecting regulations. All our principal manufactures had been encouraged by high protecting duties, which in some cases amounted almost to prohibition, so that foreign commodities of the same description were almost excluded from the home market. While such was the encouragement afforded to these manufactures, what would be the state of the agricultural interest if it were to be left without similar encouragement? Not to protect would be to discourage."

He traced the history of the corn trade in this country. "For nearly a century, down to 1766, we had not only grown a sufficiency of corn for our own support, but had even been exporters. Since 1766 we had been importers. But he would ask whether during the first of these periods, while we were an exporting country, we were in other respects behindhand in commerce or industry, or if our manufactures were decreasing. So far from this being the case, while we were exporting our corn we were also increasing in our population, our commerce, and our manufactures as much as we had increased since. Between the Revolution and 1750 our foreign commerce trebled; our shipping nearly trebled; our population, though on this subject there were not the same certain data on which to rely, had certainly increased very greatly; our domestic

industry of all kinds had also increased rapidly. Nor could it be said that this arose from the absence of national debt or from the exemption from taxes. For during the period to which he was alluding the national debt was nearly as great in proportion to our wealth as it was at present, and the taxes were also very high. And, while our commerce, trade, and manufactures were thus flourishing, the price of grain was more uniformly cheap than had ever been known either before or since.

“He had said that of the policy of rendering ourselves as independent as possible of foreign supply there could be no doubt. In saying this he was not thinking of the interests of the English landlord or of the Irish landlord; nor did he profess to move the second reading of the bill on any such ground. He was speaking of the interest of the consumer. And this he contended would be effectually promoted by the present bill, the effect of which would be to render grain cheaper instead of dearer. The important point to attain was a steady and moderate price. To prevent fluctuation of price had been the primary object of all the past legislation on the subject; but there was now a more important consideration which had not been entered into on former occasions: the supply from Ireland. Since the Act of 1806, which allowed free importation from that country, it had become evident from the supply regularly received from that country that it was only necessary to permit capital to flow thither, and there was then no limit to the quantity which might be furnished by that part of the United Kingdom to the other parts. And, as the object of the bill was not the protection of the English nor of the Irish landlord, but the general interests of the empire, and the general interests of agriculture, and the general interests of all the great mass of consumers throughout the kingdom, even if the consequence should be to lower rents in England and to increase them in Ireland, that would form no argument against the bill, which embraced the whole interests of the empire.”

As to the price adopted as the limit, he admitted that "the evidence on this point varied. If some thought 80s. too high, on the other hand calculations entitled to respect carried the requisite price higher, up to 85s. He believed that the Ministry had fixed on a limit that was moderate and fair to all classes. But he warned all who really wished to arrive at a fair judgment against being influenced by that most fallacious apprehension that the import price of 80s. would be the minimum price of the market. This was negatived by all experience, since it appeared by all the returns that the market price had been uniformly below the import price, except in years of scarcity. Instead of the *minimum* the import price had usually been more than the *maximum* price in the market." And, with pointed and avowed reference to the recent riots, he affirmed his belief that "many of the petitions which had been presented to the House had been dictated by artful misrepresentations that the effect of the present bill would be to raise the price of the quartern loaf to 1s. 4d.; while he contended that, even if wheat was at 80s., the price of the quartern loaf ought not to be more than a shilling, a price which could not now be felt by the consumer as an evil; while if wheat were sold, as he contended it would be, below 80s., the price of the loaf would also fall in the same proportion.

"It had been argued that one effect of this measure would be, by raising the price of provisions, to raise the price of labour, and thus to compel our manufacturers to emigrate by enabling foreigners to undersell them. He contended, however, that the success of our manufactures did not depend upon the cheapness of labour, but on capital, credit, and fuel. The importance of this latter article was clearly shown by the thriving establishment of manufactories in those counties in which coal was most plentiful. Our excellence in machinery, too, gave us a decided superiority. Indeed, the evidence given by some of our principal manufacturers with regard to the Orders in Council proved that they considered cheapness of labour

as of comparatively little consequence ; while there was no doubt that the condition of the labourer himself was better when both the price of bread and wages were high than when they were both low." He went on to show the danger of depending to a great extent on foreign supply for articles of absolute necessity, by the price to which some articles of naval stores had risen. "The article of hemp had risen during the war from 40*l.* to 100*l.* per ton. What would be the result if we were dependent in the same way upon foreign nations for our food, the price of which they might raise, or altogether withhold the supply, at pleasure ? It was then of the greatest consequence that we should draw our main supply from our own resources. Finally, if error there were, it was safer to err by adopting than by rejecting the bill. If it were passed, and any inconvenience were found to arise from it, a remedy might be immediately applied ; but if it were rejected, and capital were in consequence withdrawn from agriculture, fifty years might be necessary to replace us in our present situation."

The arguments of Opposition turned more on the details than on the principle of the bill. Lord Grey raised the question whether Parliament was in possession of sufficient information to legislate at once, and urged a further enquiry into different points on which he conceived they were still in comparative ignorance ; the expenses of cultivation and of importation, the prices in foreign markets, the effect which any alteration in the cost of food might have on wages and the rate of labour, and other matters of that kind : and Lord Grenville, who affirmed that the intended alteration of the law must inevitably raise the price of bread, proposed a limit of 72*s.* instead of 80*s.* He reminded his hearers also that, from the rate at which our population was increasing, the day must come when it would be no longer possible to feed ourselves from our own resources, so that the law now proposed could be but comparatively short-lived ; a fact of which, however, Lord Liverpool had already expressed himself aware. The question of the Corn-laws is now so completely and for ever settled that



the arguments on the different sides have lost the chief part of the interest they once possessed, and it seems superfluous to linger longer on the subject. It is sufficient to state that the bill was carried in the form proposed by the ministers, and that it remained the law for several years, though it was eventually found productive, especially when the harvest was bad, of evils greater than those which it had been intended to avert ; and a new bill to place the trade for the future on a different footing was among the last labours which occupied Lord Liverpool's mind.

A debate which took place later in the session, on the long-vexed question of concession to the Roman Catholics, has greater interest at the present moment, not from the arguments advanced on each side, which were too nearly identical with others which have already been fully detailed to render it necessary to reproduce them, but because, in the discussion which took place in the House of Commons, a document was laid on the table in the form of a letter from Mgr. Quarantotti, the prelate who, during the detention of the Pope in France, was invested with the chief authority in ecclesiastical affairs at Rome ; in which, after a careful deliberation with some of the most distinguished ecclesiastics then in that city, he announced the consent of the Papal See to give the King a veto on all ecclesiastical appointments within the United Kingdom. In the year 1799 the Irish Roman Catholic bishops, in the hope of obtaining a provision from the British Government for themselves and the rest of the clergy of their faith in the two islands, had passed resolutions in the same spirit, and the principle which they had admitted then was now adopted in the plainest language<sup>1</sup> by the authorities at

<sup>1</sup> The letter was addressed to Dr. Poynter, the Vicar-Apostolic. The following sentences are those of the greatest importance : " It is highly proper that our prelates should be agreeable and acceptable to the King ; that they should exercise their ministry with his full consent ; in fine, that their probity should be evident even to those who are not in the bosom of the Church. For a Bishop, as the Apostle teaches (1 Tim. iii. 7), must have a good testimony from those who are

Rome. Few even of those most favorable to religious liberty among the British statesmen were inclined to concede the demands of the Roman Catholics unconditionally, but the terms thus offered would have been sufficient for security, and to this day both islands and both parties are suffering from the rejection of them; though nothing that has since occurred can justify those who now threaten to refuse terms which they were then willing to accept; nor is it possible to pretend that stipulations which the highest authorities of their Church then admitted to be wholly compatible with all that they had a right to demand, and not more than was necessary for the maintenance of the proper dignity and authority of the British sovereign, have in any degree changed their character, have since that day become less consistent with the fair claims of the Roman Church, or less indispensable to the proper authority of the monarch and the tranquillity of the empire.

On other subjects, too, there were fierce debates during this session. The war with a foreign enemy did not, as in the preceding year, cause a cessation of party warfare at home: it may even be said that the animosity of the Opposition to the Ministry was exasperated by the renewal of the war, one section endeavouring to convict them of having themselves led to it by their mistaken policy of the

without. On these accounts, by the authority vested in us, we allow that those who are designed for a bishopric or deanery, and are proposed by the clergy, be admitted or rejected by the King, according to the proposed bill. Therefore, after the clergy have in the usual manner chosen those whom they shall have judged in the Lord to be worthy to be exalted to those dignities, in Ireland the Metropolitan of the province, in England and Scotland the senior Apostolic Vicar, shall announce them to the Committee for the royal approbation or dissent. If the candidates be rejected, others shall be proposed who may be pleasing to his Majesty," &c. The whole letter, with the resolutions of the Irish prelates in 1779, is printed in the "*Parliamentary Debates*," *xxi.* 482. And after the Pope returned to Rome, he sanctioned it by a very similar letter which Cardinal Litta wrote by his direction to Dr. Poynter in 1816, and which the next year was in like manner produced in the House of Commons by Mr. Grattan.

previous year, and another protesting that the position now assumed by Napoleon supplied no reason whatever for again having recourse to war; while of the different arrangements which had been adopted at Vienna scarcely one escaped an attack more or less formal.

The first attack, though of course the entire Cabinet was involved in the charge made, and their ministerial existence depended on the decision, was in reality aimed at Lord Castlereagh for having, as our plenipotentiary, acceded to the Treaty of Fontainebleau, by which Napoleon was allowed to retire to Elba with the rank of a sovereign. It was made by the Marquis of Wellesley, who denounced it, with extreme vehemence of language, as impolitic and unnecessary, and who further complained that, such as it was, no precautions had been taken by us to ensure the performance by France of the engagements into which, under it, she had entered with Napoleon. As we have already seen, it was notorious that Lord Castlereagh had only acceded to that treaty because on his arrival in Paris he found that the Czar had gone so far in arranging it that he looked on his personal honour as pledged to its conclusion without material alteration. But Lord Wellesley contended that we had taken such a lead in the war that our minister had a right also, "nay, was bound, to insist also upon a lead in the transaction that was to terminate the conflict, by putting an end for ever to the power of the man who had caused the war." He characterised the allegation "that another Power had entered into an engagement before our minister arrived in Paris, and that therefore nothing remained for him but to accede to that engagement or to continue the war, and to involve France and Europe in convulsion, as an aggravation of the fault that had been committed and of the misconduct of the ministers." He affirmed that "from the reduced power and distressed state of Napoleon in the spring of 1814, he was likely in any case to fall into the power of the allies, when they might have dealt with him at their discretion." He even

forgot the ordinary courtesies of Parliamentary language in the vehemence with which he denounced the ministers as "abject and wretched in intellect" for doubting the certainty that Napoleon must have become a prisoner, and was almost equally strong in his condemnation of them for not having foreseen the probability of his escape from Elba, and not having taken means to prevent it. The treaty he pronounced "the most dangerous and the most disgraceful that his country had ever concluded." And, having also reprobated our consent to that part of the arrangement by which Napoleon was to receive a large income from the French Government, he held the ministers responsible because, as he maintained, the French Government had failed to discharge that pecuniary obligation, and thus had given Napoleon a plea for disregarding the other provisions of the treaty, and invading France.

Lord Liverpool defended his colleague manfully. Against his assailant he could make the plausible defence that last year in the debate on the general peace Lord Wellesley had not uttered a single word against the arrangement which placed Napoleon on the throne of Elba; so that he appeared so far to be only wise after the event. But he did not shrink also from justifying the treaty of Fontainebleau itself, as one not impolitic while Napoleon was still at liberty, "retaining possession of every fortified town in France and Holland, and all the fortified towns on the Rhine, on the Elbe, and in Italy. He had a large body of forces actually at Fontainebleau; the armies of Soult and Suchet were faithful to him; indeed no part of his army except Marmont's division had deserted him; and he could rely implicitly on the army of Italy, which, though not great in numbers, was in its quality and appointments more formidable than any other which he could have brought into the field. If under such circumstances Lord Castlereagh had rejected the treaty, and any failure of the operations of the allies had afterwards taken place, the result might have been

fatal not only to France but to Europe, and they would have been told, 'You had at last delivered Europe, you had it in your power to make an honorable and safe arrangement for the peace of the world, and you threw it away for what you called an act of vigour.' " With respect to the charge of not having foreseen and guarded against Napoleon's departure from Elba, he showed undeniably that, as he had been left "a free agent, with the means of carrying on any correspondence and any intrigues he thought proper, it was absolutely impossible for any Power to prevent his returning to France. The whole fleet of England could have had no power to keep him or any other individual in Elba, if they chose to leave it. It had no power to search the meanest fishing-vessel, much less an armed ship." And he disposed of the marquis's argument that the neglect of France to fulfil her compact with Napoleon had furnished him with a plea for breaking his engagements, by showing that "in none of his proclamations had he attempted to set up any breach of the treaty as the cause of his return; on the contrary, he had distinctly averred that he landed in France to reclaim his crown because he was summoned by the voice of the nation." In fact, however, as has been already shown, Lord Castlereagh had seen the folly of the treaty in question from the first; he had expressed his disapproval of it, acceding to it only partially because he could not reject it without altogether breaking with the Czar. His colleagues had agreed with him; and Lord Liverpool's defence of the treaty on this occasion must be taken rather as an expression of the inexpediency of branding as impolitic and mischievous the act of a monarch with whom we were a second time in close alliance, and whom therefore it was desirable to avoid offending, especially when no condemnation now passed on the treaty could undo its effects. No consideration was so important at the moment as to avoid disturbing the harmony of the new alliance; and it must often be the duty of a statesman to acquiesce

in what is past, and to make the best of what is irremediable.

But he could have had no drawback of a secret sentiment opposing itself to the language which, as Prime Minister, he felt bound to hold in resisting the next attack which was levelled at his policy by Lord Grey.

The instant that the news of Napoleon having landed at Fréjus reached Vienna, the members of the Congress drew up a declaration denouncing him as a public enemy, and pledging their respective states to unite in one common alliance "to crush this last mad attempt of criminal ambition." In accordance with this resolution, when, at the beginning of April, Caulaincourt, on the part of Napoleon, wrote to Lord Castlereagh to announce his "having resumed the government of his empire," the Secretary of State transmitted the letter at once to Vienna, while the Prince Regent declined to receive one which was addressed to himself. A similar letter, which was forwarded to the Emperor of Austria, was in like manner returned. The whole body of the allies began at once to make the most vigorous preparations for war, and two messages were at intervals sent down to Parliament by the Regent, each of which, though they slightly differed in their language, amounted to a declaration of war, and to an appeal to the nation to enable his Royal Highness so to fulfil his engagements to his allies as to carry it on to a successful close. The chief debate arose on the second message, and among other circumstances it was memorable as leading to a difference of opinion and a severance on questions of foreign policy between Lord Grenville and Lord Grey. Lord Liverpool opened the discussion in a speech whose elaborateness testified to his just apprehension of the magnitude of the crisis. He confessed "the duty of every Government to avoid war whenever it could be avoided with honour and safety. He admitted that the circumstances of the time would have led him to deprecate war at that moment with more than usual eagerness; but the question now was

whether, from the long and lamentable experience we had had of the system which had been invariably pursued by the Government now existing in France, they could entertain any reasonable hope whatever that treaties would be regarded, or that violence and aggression would be refrained from, for a longer period than that which would be necessary effectually to prepare the means for the renewal of the same course which had already brought upon Europe such dreadful calamities. The question now was, whether it was possible for us long to remain at peace. He would not expect their Lordships to give their sanction to the renewal of hostilities if the evils of war could be avoided consistently with the honour and safety of the nation ; but, if the circumstances of the case were such that it was impossible to rely for a moment on the disposition of the existing Government of France to refrain from aggression, so as to permit this country to enjoy the advantages of peace with safety, then no impolitic love of repose should deter us from looking boldly at our real situation and manfully meeting the difficulty, even if it could only be met by war. With respect to the treaty which Great Britain and her allies recently concluded at Vienna, it was fortunate for the cause of Europe that Buonaparte had returned from Elba while the allied Powers were still in deliberation at Vienna, and before any of them had placed their armies on a peace establishment, which might have made their active and instant co-operation a matter of difficulty. Under such circumstances the question was not whether we should have war with Buonaparte at all, but whether we should have it at once, or should wait to let him have an opportunity of establishing his power, of recruiting his army, and repressing any discontent or disposition to resist him which might exist in France itself. Even supposing we had not decided on immediate war, who could have advised a diminution of our preparations for war, a reduction of our forces ? Peace under such circumstances could have been but an armed peace, a feverish state of suspense to which

that repose and tranquillity which was usually taken to be synonymous with peace would be unknown ; it would be a peace accompanied by the expenses of war and the anxieties of war.

“Of the result he had no fear. The history of the past war showed that if at one time our efforts were unsuccessful, they were so only because we had not been able till a late period to produce a general confederacy of the great Powers of Europe. When we did succeed in forming such a confederacy, it was completely successful ; and it was revived now in all its unanimity and strength. Would their Lordships hesitate in approving the policy which made us members of it, perhaps the most formidable alliance which the history of the world recorded ? Nor was there any inconsistency between the willingness which the Ministry had shown at the commencement of the negotiations at Chatillon in 1814, to make peace with the present ruler of France, and the attitude of hostility which we at once assumed towards him on his recent invasion of that country. It must be recollected that at that time he was in possession of the throne as the undisputed sovereign of the nation, and that, before the occupation of Bordeaux by the British troops, no manifestation whatever had been made in any part of France of the least disposition to resist his authority. Then he was in undisputed possession of the kingdom ; now there was reason to believe that great part of the people of France were adverse to him.”

Finally, he laid down with dignity and moderation the views which he and his colleagues entertained of the object to be attained by the present war. He denounced all wars of ambition, even if security or some other specious pretext were put forward as their justification. “But the present contest, he believed he could speak for all the allies, but most certainly he could assert it for Great Britain, was entered upon from no idea of any other interest than that of the general peace and security of Europe. There was no desire on the part of any of the confederates to see the



power of France abridged, or to diminish her resources. Their only wish was to see a Government established which might afford to Europe, and to the world, a possibility of remaining at peace. As to the re-establishment of the Bourbons in that country, he confessed it was an object dear to his heart, not only on principles of feeling which he was not ashamed to own, but because it would afford the best chance of repose to Europe. As he had said, during the negotiations at Chatillon last year there was no manifestation of sentiments in France against the present ruler, or in favour of the Bourbons: now, according to the best information he could collect, three-fourths of the people were in favour of Louis. The preference for him was almost unanimous in the south, the west, and the north of France. And with a knowledge of this fact, and with a full conviction that the general security of Europe would be best consulted by the re-establishment of Louis XVIII., he should be wrong not to wish for such a consummation. At the same time he acknowledged that no country or cabinet had a right to dictate to another nation what Government it should choose. If it were the deliberate decision of a people to reject any particular form or family, no Power could rightly interfere to force them into subjection to it. But still the nations of Europe had a right to interfere to overthrow a Government the establishment of which would be inconsistent with their peace and security. They had a right to say to France, not what Government she should, but what Government she should not have. The distinction was clear and self-evident; and the right was the more evident when it was recollected that last year the conditions of peace had been made more favorable to France on account of the re-establishment of a Government the good faith and character of which enabled Europe to look forward to tranquillity and repose. The co-operation of this country in the war was all-important to its success; and, if their Lordships conceived that the alliance was founded on just principles of policy, they

could not wish that this country should incur odium and disgrace by showing unwillingness to join in the great work of crushing the greatest evil which had existed within the memory of man. It was not on calculations alone, which in ordinary cases governed human policy, that the present contest was founded, but on a sentiment of common sense by which every man must have said to himself, 'While this state of things continues I cannot be safe.' Such must be the feelings of all classes in every nation. Such were the grounds of a war which was to be carried on by means which had already done so much, by an alliance by which Europe had once been delivered. The great work was once more to be commenced, and the event, he doubted not, would be the tranquillity of Europe, the peace of nations, and the establishment on a firm basis of their rights, their liberties, and their independence."

It was not easy to reply to such a speech, at once so comprehensive in the reasons which it gave for the policy it announced, and so candid and precise in its details; at once so moderate in the objects which it avowed, and so firm in the resolution it expressed. And Lord Grey, when he undertook the task, showed his consciousness of its arduous character by the far-fetched precedents on which he relied, drawn from the history of the Pragmatic Sanction, of the War of the Succession, and of other disputes which certainly had no resemblance whatever to the case before the House. He denied that Lord Liverpool had "established either the right or the expediency of going to war. He had not established the right, for he had not proved it to be necessary for our own security, or that the apprehensions of danger that had been alleged were sincere. Nor, if Buonaparte had broken any treaty by his return to France, had we made any demand on him for reparation. But he affirmed also that no act had been performed, no aggression made, no insult offered, by France which required reparation. On the contrary, injury had been done to Buonaparte, and the treaty which had been concluded

with him at Fontainebleau had been violated by the non-payment of his pension. And he maintained that therefore he had a right to consider himself as absolved from the conditions of his abdication; and the manner of proceeding in such a case depended on his own judgment.

“Again, what was the species of danger against which we claimed a right to provide by this declaration of war? Was a danger arising from the personal existence and personal character of Buonaparte sufficient to authorise an interposition? He would ask whether in the history of war, disfigured as it was by false pretences, such a principle was ever before heard of? He would ask whether any writer in times comparatively civilized gives a single instance of a foreign Power interfering to prevent the choice of a sovereign on account of his personal character and qualities? And, if we had no right to make war on Buonaparte personally, we had also no right to make war on France for receiving him back; for the Treaty of Paris of last year did not forbid her to do so: even Lord Liverpool admitted that France had a right to choose any ruler she pleased, and any form of government: and, though Lord Liverpool had contended that an exception was made as to Buonaparte, he dissented from the statement, for such an exception must not be left to be collected from inference, but must be stated in express and unmistakable terms; and there was no mention whatever of Buonaparte’s abdication in the Treaty of Paris.” On the question of expediency Lord Grey began by quoting Burke’s assertion that, “As a nation could not be justified in pursuing war for a profitable wrong, so neither could it be justified in commencing war for an unprofitable right,” a doctrine of which, if the words are really Burke’s,<sup>1</sup> with all respect to

<sup>1</sup> It is not, however, clear to what passage in Burke’s works Lord Grey alluded. In his speech on American Taxation, April 19th, 1774, I find nearly the same words in a similar antithesis; but the sense is far from being that intended by Lord Grey. Burke’s words are: “If you must employ your strength, employ it to uphold you in some honorable right, or some profitable wrong” (ii. 424, ed. 1803).

the great orator, it may certainly be said that the illustration by which he enforces his assertion is far from proving it, and is in no respect analogous to it. Lord Grey, however, interpreted it as affirming that, "in other words, the principle of necessity alone was that of expediency. It was admitted that the French might have put Ney or Masséna at the head of their Government without giving us any pretence for complaining of them; and, comparing what France might have been under them with what it actually was under Buonaparte, he would ask, Was the difference such as to justify ministers in plunging this country into a new war before she had time to bind up the still-bleeding wounds inflicted in her late and long-contested hostilities? Nay, who could say that all change in the character of Buonaparte himself was impossible: or, even if there were no change in his character, might there not be a change in his policy? Had he not, during his year of exile, had ample opportunity of reflecting on his former errors? Had he not had the means of detecting the causes of his temporary ruin? and might he not have become impressed with the necessity of abandoning that system which had already cost him too dear? He was also fast advancing to that period of life when active exertion is no longer to be expected. Moreover, Lord Liverpool was mistaken in giving the late Revolution in France the character of a mere military movement: he himself firmly believed that the popular opinion in France was decidedly in favour of peace, and that Buonaparte, however indisposed to do so, felt compelled to give way to it."

But Lord Grey's favorite strain of eloquence was at all times the prophetic strain. Military operations and military skill were the topics on which he most loved to dilate with the authority of a profound critic. During Wellington's earlier campaigns in the Peninsula the burden of his song had alternately been the incompetency of the general and the impossibility of his success. And though, as has been mentioned before, with a candour greatly to his honour,

he had subsequently confessed how greatly he had been mistaken on those points, he could not resist the temptation of resuming his prophetic character, and pouring forth anticipations as confident as they were gloomy of the result of the war on which we were entering. "He pronounced that, even if we should succeed in displacing Buonaparte, the attainment of Lord Liverpool's object, the restoration of the Bourbon family, was impossible. It was a family absolutely repulsive to all France. But what chance was there that we should succeed? In 1814 the French armies available for Napoleon's last struggle with the allies were weakened by the absence of many thousands of choice troops employed in garrisoning distant fortresses, and of at least 170,000 prisoners of war. These men had now returned to France, and must, at least, form a fund for recruiting the army of at least 200,000 men. Buonaparte on his accession found 150,000 in a complete state of equipment; 100,000 more were ready to be called out; there were 170,000 select companies of National Guards; while measures which had been adopted would call out 3,000 battalions of 700 men each; forming an aggregate of upwards of two millions of men. The effect of our declaration of war against France would inevitably be to call forth all the military energies of that people; and it was contrary to the principles of human nature to overcome the resistance of what was termed by Mr. Pitt an armed nation. In looking to the state of France, therefore, there was no reason to look for any success for the allied army: on the contrary, the war with France would strengthen the hands of Buonaparte's Government, and enable it to oppress and extinguish entirely whatever spirit of dissatisfaction might exist in that country. The condition of the allies themselves afforded even less ground for hope. Was even the British army as available now as it was a year ago? Was that great general, who had hitherto been so successful in all his undertakings, was the Duke of Wellington now at the head of those invincible legions who

had gained such immortal honour to their country, of those brave companions-in-arms who had such confidence in the man who had so often led them to victory? The flower of his old army had been sent to America, where numbers of them had found their graves. The rest of the allies were neither united among themselves, nor now, as before, able to put forth their undivided strength in the contest. Prussia had to keep down Saxony; Russia to keep down Poland, and at the same time perhaps to oppose an army to Turkey; Austria would be occupied with Italy. Even in 1814, when circumstances were so different, when the allies were powerful from their union and numbers, it was by a narrow accident that they escaped destruction. And if success was obtained with such difficulty then, what hopes could we possibly have that the same success would attend our efforts now?

"The allies had declared that with Buonaparte they could make neither peace nor truce. Was there no danger of the dissolution of this alliance? What would be our situation if the events of the war should induce some of the Powers to fall off from the confederacy? And it must be remembered that the declaration which had been made reduced us to a dreadful alternative. Either the termination of the conquest must be crowned with complete success, or with abject humiliation by the compulsory acknowledgment of Buonaparte, after signal and decisive defeats. If, after such a declaration, after such proceedings at Vienna, after such a triumph over the fallen, Buonaparte should again rise above his enemies, even without attributing to him all the bad passions ascribed to him by Lord Liverpool, what hope at least could our allies indulge? What hope could even we have, with diminished population and exhausted revenues, of maintaining our independence?" Lord Grey concluded by moving a series of resolutions protesting against and condemning the war. But his speech had failed to convince even his friend Lord Grenville of the soundness of the

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difficulties which Lord Liverpool, as the head of the Ministry, had throughout the whole of his career to encounter, to set forth the unceasing unscrupulousness of the Opposition, who, at a time when Napoleon had already pushed forward a strong force as far as the Belgian frontier, could seek thus to throw obstacles in the way of our Government and general ; resting their arguments on grounds utterly untenable and absurd : on the ability of France to raise an army of above two millions of men, and on the probability of Napoleon, who was not yet forty-six years old, already being, or soon becoming, through the infirmities of age, indisposed to the exertions necessary for the vigorous conduct of military operations.

On some of the territorial arrangements recently adopted on the Continent warm discussions also arose, in which the policy of the ministers was attacked with greater or less vehemence by the Opposition ; but on every such question the judgment of Parliament was pronounced decidedly in their favour. The Marquis of Buckingham severely condemned the transfer of Genoa to the King of Sardinia ; a transaction in connection with which it was impossible to deny that Lord William Bentinck had shown the greatest incapacity, combined with the greatest presumption, and had assumed an authority with which the Government had never invested him ; but Lord Liverpool showed conclusively that the Government was entirely clear from the charge brought against them, of having broken faith with Genoa, while the policy of "placing a barrier between France and Italy strong enough to prevent the latter country from being again overrun and conquered by the former, as had been the case in the late war, an end which could only be attained by making the Power which was the natural guardian of the Alps strong enough to defend their passes," imperatively required the course which had been adopted. On the question of Naples the Opposition forbore to press their views to a division, though Lord Grey did not scruple to hint



an opinion that the charges of treachery to the allies, which Lord Liverpool held to be conclusively established, were not wholly proved, and contended "that we had had the benefit of the co-operation of Murat, though probably not to the extent which was expected." A motion which was threatened on the subject of Saxony was never brought forward, and the Opposition could not even venture to invite the House to express a positive disapproval of the convention between us, Russia, and the Netherlands, by which we had rendered ourselves jointly responsible with the Netherlands for the payment of a sum of more than four millions of money, which was owed by Russia to the merchants of Amsterdam. The only point in the different arrangements which were concluded at Vienna in which any material error of judgment seems fairly imputable to Lord Castlereagh was in connection with the new kingdom of the Netherlands, his liberality to which was certainly excessive and uncalled for. He spontaneously gave up the island of Java, which four years before, as has already been seen, we had conquered from the Dutch; at the same time he undertook that we should bear the chief charge of fortifying the Flemish frontier; and, finally, by burdening us with this payment, which Russia was bound to make, he benefited both the debtor and the creditor at our expense. Apart from the want of any necessity to justify such a Quixotic generosity, it might have been doubted whether the act was altogether consistent with the deference he owed to his colleagues, and especially to the Prime Minister; since, as we have already seen, Lord Liverpool had in more than one despatch especially warned him against imposing such a burden upon us, urging upon him that "it would be on principle one of the most difficult questions to defend that ever was brought before Parliament."<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, with his habitual generosity to a colleague whom he esteemed, when Lord Grey commented

<sup>1</sup> See his letter of November 2d, 1814, *ante*, p. 51.

with severity on "this lavish expenditure of the public money, and the careless indifference which appeared in this and other instances about heaping the most enormous burdens on the oppressed and deluded people of this country," for to such demagogic rants did the chief of the Opposition often descend at this time, Lord Liverpool stood forward in his defence as unshrinkingly as if he had cheerfully consented to the act, defending it on the ground "of the prodigious exertions made by Russia in the common cause, and the distressed state of her finances; while, though this country too had made its exertions and had endured its burdens, it ought never to be forgotten that, during the whole of the eventful struggle, she had never been the scene of foreign invasion. No one could be more sensible than he himself was, (his situation indeed incessantly forced the knowledge upon him,) how great were the burdens and privations to which the people were exposed. But, when we looked at them, we should also never forget that to our patient endurance of those burdens, to our persevering exertions, we owed the security and prosperity, perhaps even the salvation, of our country." He dwelt on "the vast exertions of Russia beyond her own territory, the great advantage which we had derived from those exertions, and the state of the Russian finances. He admitted that it was not a claim of strict and rigid justice, but an appeal to the liberality of this country, and he called on the House to agree with him that the engagements entered into were fully justified by the soundest views of policy and expediency."

Every one of the arguments which were here brought forward in favour of our thus relieving Russia of her liabilities might have been urged far more cogently against our doing so. The losses sustained by Russia in the invasion of her territory and the destruction of her ancient capital had no doubt been greater than any which we had experienced, because the consummate skill of our admirals and the heroism of our sailors had preserved the inviola-

bility of our own shores, and had compelled Napoleon to abandon all hope of invading Britain, though his heart had been set with full as great eagerness on that enterprise as it was afterwards on the subjugation of Alexander. It was by our own resources, and by no aid from Russia, that we had defended ourselves. Again, if the question was to turn on the exertions made, there could be no comparison whatever between those put forth by Britain and by Russia. For twenty-two years we had waged incessant and often single-handed war with France under her different revolutionary Governments. During many of those years Russia had not only given us no aid, but had been arrayed on the side of France against us. The war in the Peninsula, which was the contest that really broke down Napoleon's power, had been wholly maintained by us. And, numerous as were the troops which in the autumn of 1813 Russia and the other sovereigns led down to the Rhine, the British army had been established on French soil nearly three months before a single Russian or German soldier crossed its eastern frontier. Nor had the exertions by which we had sustained those efforts, as unparalleled in their duration and magnitude as in their final success, been unattended by sacrifices, though of a different character from those which had been endured by our allies. We had had no small share in keeping their armies on foot; we had furnished them all with subsidies so vast in amount that we had trebled our debt, and it seemed unreasonable to contend, as was now argued, that the vast amount of our former expenditure was in itself a reason for increasing it, or that the "patience which we had displayed," the "persevering exertions" which we had made, while the contest lasted, could justify further calls on those virtues now that the contest was terminated.

Yet, though Lord Liverpool's arguments on this subject not only lacked real validity, but were capable of being retorted against him with greater force, it does not follow

that he deserved blame for advancing them, or for defending a colleague whose conduct in this particular he disapproved. In such cases the duty of a Prime Minister differs wholly from that of the leader of the Opposition. The latter is, from his situation, generally the assailant. He has the choice of his operations ; he is bound, as an honest man, to a course of candour and sincerity inconsistent with the use of arguments which in his heart he knows to be unsound. If his attacks on the conduct of the Administration are unjust, and his arguments sophistical and ungenerous, he deserves condemnation as a factious carrier on of political warfare with unfair weapons. But a Prime Minister is not an equally free agent. Acts may have been performed which he would have prevented had he anticipated them, which he even may have striven to prevent, failing through no fault of his own, but through, it may be, the carelessness, or the rashness, or the wilfulness of some colleague or subordinate officer, of whose general ability and prudence, of the purity of whose motives, of the value of whose services on the whole, he has a high opinion. To refuse to defend his one faulty deed must be to abandon him altogether, may be to admit the culpability of the whole Administration, every member of which is constitutionally responsible for the actions of his colleague. The deed which, before it was done, duty to his sovereign and his country might have enjoined him to do his utmost to prevent, which the same feeling now compels him deeply to regret, duty to his colleague may nevertheless now require him to justify ; and so to justify it will not be inconsistent with the higher duty which he owes to his country, since the nation can never be well served if its servants cannot look for a generous construction of their conduct, and cannot trust to their superiors to uphold them, even in occasional errors, so long as they have their source in no evil intention, no want of patriotism, nor deliberate and inexcusable insubordination.

## CHAPTER XIX.

Condition of Buonaparte at Elba—Confidence of Lord Liverpool—Wellington, at Vienna, signs a treaty with Austria, Russia, and Prussia against Napoleon—Forms his army in the Netherlands—Lord Harrowby is sent by the Cabinet to learn his opinion—Louis XVIII. establishes himself at Ghent—Lord Liverpool's view of the whole state of affairs—Napoleon's advance—Quatre-Bras, Waterloo—Capture of Paris—Louis re-enters Paris—Lord Liverpool's view of the policy to be pursued—Bad spirit of the Prussians—Restoration of the works of art to the different countries—We resolve to send Napoleon to St. Helena—Legal difficulties of such a step—Proposed reduction of the territory of France—Resisted by our Government—Lord Liverpool's views in favour of a temporary occupation of France—Great difficulties of Louis XVIII.—Admission of Fouché into the Ministry—Establishment of the Duke de Richelieu's Ministry—Fouché's report and dismissal—Holy Alliance—Trial of Marshal Ney—Opinion and conduct of Lord Liverpool—Conclusion of the treaty with France—A bill providing for the suppression of the Slave-trade—Lord Liverpool interferes on behalf of the French Protestants.

THE war in which we were engaged was briefer, more decisive, and more glorious to us, on whom the brunt of the conflict fell, than the most sanguine confidence could have anticipated. Wellington, who, as a matter of course, was re-appointed to the command of our army, never doubted of success, nor did Lord Liverpool; but even they could not have looked forward to a triumph so early and so complete as to leave nothing to be done afterwards beyond reaping its fruits.

The enterprise of Napoleon, though it seems to have taken the rest of the allies by surprise, was not unexpected

by our statesmen, nor altogether by the French ministers. Besides the conviction which Lord Liverpool and Lord Castlereagh had entertained from the first that the situation of his new kingdom must act as a perpetual temptation to the restlessness which Napoleon could not but feel, we knew that he was suffering under that peculiar grievance which is proverbially the incentive to deeds of warlike daring, poverty.<sup>1</sup> Among Lord Liverpool's papers is a narrative transmitted to him from Rome by an English traveller, who in the course of January had visited Elba, and had been admitted to an interview with the sovereign of the island. Napoleon had received him with great affability, had paid compliments to the power of England, had praised the military skill of the Duke of Wellington; but, amid these expressions of studied amity, his conversation from time to time glanced upon topics which seemed to show that he was still revolving in his mind the chances of a fresh war. "Belgium," he said, "ought to have remained a part of France. It was bad policy in England to appropriate the Netherlands to herself," an absurd misrepresentation, which, though not out of character with some of his old state papers, was indicative of ideas less friendly than his language, particularly when he added, "They would be a perpetual source of expense, and might draw us into a war, as any Power wanting the support of France would offer her that country as a bribe." He spoke, too, of his last campaign, and "observed that the peasantry were rising in the rear of the allied army, and that he should have done very well if he had not been betrayed."

The gentleman added, as what had come to his hearing while in the island, that "Buonaparte was reduced to his last shilling. He had spent the little money he brought with him, and his pension had not been paid, though the six months had long since expired. He had not a sou in

<sup>1</sup> "Ibit eo quovis qui zonam perdidit," was, if we may believe Horace, the answer of Lucullus's veteran to his general: "Let him take castles who has ne'er a groat," as Pope translates it.

the English or any other funds, and on leaving France he did not take any of his private treasure, plate, or jewels with him." A rumour too was understood to have reached him that he was not even to be allowed to retain his little kingdom. "Respecting the rumour that Buonaparte was to be removed from Elba to St. Helena, it is said that he declares that he will only be removed by force."

Lord Liverpool, as we have said, had hardly needed a communication such as this to make him suspect the reality of the contentment with his new situation which Napoleon, when not off his guard, was accustomed to affect; while M. de Blacas had reason to believe in the existence of a conspiracy against the King in France itself, with which Napoleon had originally no concern, since it was set on foot by the partisans of the Duc d'Orleans, though he had probably sufficient knowledge of it to look upon it as a circumstance in his favour, since, at all events, it was hostile to the reigning dynasty. But when the attempt was actually made, it found the English minister more ready for action than his French ally. Strange as it must appear at the present day, it was not till the 10th of March that the news of Napoleon's having landed in France reached London. And since, among the things to be done instantly, it was manifestly an object of the first importance to ascertain the state of feeling of the French themselves, and especially of their army, Lord Liverpool with great judgment despatched his own brother, Colonel Jenkinson, to Paris, with instructions, after consulting with Lord Fitzroy Somerset, who, while the Duke of Wellington was at Vienna, had been left in charge of our diplomatic relations at the court of the Tuileries, to proceed to join the French army in the south-east or the south-west, and from the head-quarters to keep the Cabinet informed of all that was passing: but, before the colonel could reach Paris, it had become so doubtful whether the fidelity of any portion of the troops could be depended on that the Ministry of Louis declined to sanction his further progress.

He reported their objection to his brother, not without drawing a somewhat unpromising picture of the unchecked rapidity of Napoleon's advance; and the reply which he received is worth preserving as an evidence of the manly courage with which the Prime Minister himself always looked on difficulties when they came so close that it was needful at once to grapple with them:

*Private and confidential.*

Fife House, 21st March, 1815.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I have received your letter of the 17th inst., and, considering the actual state of affairs under which you arrived at Paris, I am not surprised that the French Government thought it more expedient that you should not, for the present at least, be attached to any of their armies.

I recommend you, under the present circumstances, to remain at Paris, and to follow the directions of Lord Fitzroy Somerset. You may be of use to him in various contingencies. He may be glad to have a confidential person of your profession, either to send to the Duke of Wellington in the event of his coming to Brussels, or to send hereafter into the south of France, where, from all accounts, the public spirit appears to be excellent.

I have subsequently received your second letter of the 17th at night. I am sorry you view matters in such a gloomy light, though I am quite aware the situation of the royal cause is most critical. In God's name, however, keep up your spirits, or otherwise you can be of no use. I do not mean that you should not see things as they really are, but you should not suffer yourself to despair. I never knew those feelings entertained by any one, that they did not, however unknown to himself, tinge the language of the person who imbibed them, and thereby produce incalculable mischief. Poor Sir John Moore was a melancholy example of what I am saying.

We shall expect in a few days to hear from Vienna the effect produced by Buonaparte's first success.

Believe me, &c.

To LIEUT.-COL. JENKINSON.

LIVERPOOL.



*Sursum corda* had been the watchword which Burke had expected the Parliament to adopt when matters looked far more gloomy than any danger could make them look now. The same motto now and always expressed Lord Liverpool's feeling when the question was how to meet and quell a foreign enemy. We have seen that, even when Wellington had been forced for the last time to retreat to the Portuguese frontier, he, certainly among all the civilians in the world standing alone in his opinion, could predict the coming invasion of France, though a whole kingdom lay between the French frontier and the army which was to accomplish that invasion. And the confidence which animated himself was by so much the more fitted to inspire others also, in that it had no tincture of haste or inconsiderateness. It was rather based on the most careful deliberation, on the most impartial estimate of the difficulties to be encountered, and of the means available to surmount them. Abundant proof of the care with which he furnished himself with every kind of information requisite to enable him to form an accurate judgment is supplied by two remarkable documents which at this time he drew up, and submitted in the first instance as questions to Wellington, and then, with the answers which he had received from the duke, to the Cabinet, in order that, by considering beforehand the different emergencies or vicissitudes of fortune which might be possible, they might be ready at once to deal with them if they should arise.

No. 1.

*Most secret and confidential.*

At the commencement of a contest so serious and critical as that which is about to take place it may be material to look at every contingency, with a view of endeavouring to form beforehand some judgment of what may be proper to be done in each particular case as it may arise.

Considering the amount of the allied force to be assembled on the frontier of France, and the present condition and numbers

of the army of that country, as well as the unsettled state of its Government, there is every reason to hope that the military operations of the allies, if combined with prudence, may be attended with complete success. In this respect, however, our expectations may be disappointed from various causes of a different nature, for which different remedies will be required.

First, the allied armies may be defeated in their invasion of France. This is a contingency which, however improbable in this case, must always be considered as possible.

In such case we shall be reduced to a defensive, and in what way that defensive is to be carried on must depend on circumstances which can only be decided at the time.

But secondly, supposing the allies to penetrate into the interior of France, and to obtain again possession of Paris; and supposing Buonaparte to retire with his army beyond the Loire; what course of military operations would it be then practical and prudent to adopt? and what are the best means of guarding against the consequences of such an event? On this point the Duke of Wellington's opinion would be particularly desirable.

Thirdly, supposing the French army to be so completely defeated as to make their retreat in force impossible; and supposing Buonaparte to escape personally, and to embark on board a ship of war in any of the French ports with a view of going to America: in such case he would have the same chance of returning again to France as he has lately had, and a crisis not very different from the present might again occur.

Can the two latter contingencies be guarded against in any other way than by endeavouring to get possession of some of the large fortresses in France, say Lille, Metz, and Strasburg, to be restored in case of complete success (*viz.* the destruction of Buonaparte), but in any other contingency to be held by the allies, at least for a given number of years, as a security against the renewal of the same dangers to Europe?

Is it necessary for any such purpose that the movement of the allies in force into the interior of France should be delayed? If so, this might constitute a serious objection to the proposal. But, if the force of the allies shall really amount to between 800,000 and 900,000 men, might not such an arrangement be

made as would secure the acquisition of some of the most important fortresses of France before the close of the present campaign : particularly considering the defective state of defence in which some of them are at the present moment ?

No. 2.

1st April, 1815.

1. What the sentiments and determinations of the Powers are likely to be under the adverse circumstances which have occurred since their declaration of March 13th, 1815 ?
2. May it be presumed that they will cordially unite and persevere in a contest against France for the overthrow of Napoleon, under the new circumstances, upon the scale of subsidy which the Duke of Wellington has been authorised to propose to them ? <sup>1</sup>
3. Supposing the Powers determined on war, within what time may offensive operations against France be entered upon generally or partially, regard being had to the supposed strength and state of the preparations of the enemy, and the importance of acting vigorously before Napoleon can have the means of calling forth the resources of France ?
4. What system is it proposed to adopt on entering France, with respect to the maintenance of the allied troops ?
5. What declaration should the allies adopt, or is the King prepared to adopt, in the present conjuncture, towards his subjects, on the entry of the allies into France ?
6. What system is to be adopted with respect to organizing, arming, or paying French subjects offering to enrol for the King ?
7. What with respect to officers and soldiers withdrawing from Napoleon and declaring for the King ?
8. What with respect to individuals or districts on the advance declaring for the King ?
9. What in case Buonaparte is obliged to fly, and should succeed in withdrawing to a neutral country, suppose America ?
10. What in case the Government archives, courts of justice, and works of art, covered by the army, should be removed from Paris before the allies reach that capital, either beyond the Loire, or elsewhere ?

<sup>1</sup> 5,000,000*l.* subsidy, 6,000,000*l.* to cover British contingent.

11. What measures of security, consistent with the laws of war, may the allies look to, either upon a principle of dismemberment, contribution, or surrender of fortresses, in the event of their not obtaining the main object of security, viz. the destruction of Napoleon's power?
12. What may be presumed to be the dangers of an unsuccessful attempt by invasion to re-establish the King's authority, as compared with those of the European Powers being united in a defensive engagement, with stipulated succours, to repel any attack by France upon the limits as settled by the Peace of Paris?
13. What plan of campaign has been decided upon by the allies; or, if not settled, by whom and when is this to be settled?
14. Do the allies consider themselves under their declaration as at war with France, or for what further deliberation does this decision wait? and when may it be expected to be decided?
15. Where are the sovereigns now supposed to be, and what are their intended motions?
16. What is likely to be their policy about Naples?
17. What about Switzerland?
18. How far have the arrangements agreed upon at Vienna been carried into final execution?

LIVERPOOL.

Wellington himself was not in England; having wound up his business at Vienna by the signature of a new treaty of alliance with Austria, Russia, and Prussia, he had hastened to Brussels to put himself at the head of the small army that was already in the Netherlands. It as yet scarcely amounted to 25,000 men; but reinforcements both from home and from the Dutch and Belgian provinces were known to be on their way to join it; and the necessity of his own presence to organize the whole, with the uncertainty which he felt as to what might be Napoleon's movements, rendered it impossible for him to leave the Netherlands for a single day. These papers therefore were sent to him, but not by the ordinary messengers. They were entrusted to two Cabinet minis-

ters, Lord Harrowby, the President of the Council, and Wellington's own brother, Mr. Wellesley Pole, the Master of the Mint; whom Lord Liverpool took the unusual step of despatching to Brussels, that they might discuss the questions themselves and all other topics which might arise out of them, and report the duke's opinion to the Government with greater precision than any mere writing could convey. His answers were assuring in the highest degree.<sup>1</sup> He had no doubt that the "King of Prussia was personally in a very ill-humour at so many points having been settled at Vienna against his wishes;" but his "hatred and fear of Buonaparte" were much stronger feelings; so that his steadiness might be thoroughly relied on. And the spirit and decision of the allies in general he pronounced "perfectly good; much beyond what could have been expected. All were perfectly determined on war: it having been decided to receive no overtures from Buonaparte." He had no doubt of the pecuniary arrangements which Lord Harrowby explained to him proving sufficient. At the same time they "did not yet consider themselves actually at war, but in an intermediate state, and would not declare till their forces were assembled. He himself, however, considered a temporary delay on this point as desirable for Belgium." His own plan of operations was, as they were all ready to act, to give Napoleon as little time as possible; and if, instead of advancing towards them, he should fall back from Paris, or if he should make any other city the seat of his government, to "pursue him wherever he might go," and press him with unceasing vigour. Of the advisability of active operations against him in preference

<sup>1</sup> Some of the questions had been already answered by him, by anticipation, in despatches which crossed Lord Harrowby on the road. The statement in the text is an abridgment of an account of his conference with the Duke, transmitted by Lord Harrowby to the Cabinet before his return.

to a defensive system he had no doubt whatever, and very little as to the success of the allies. Their numbers altogether would be far superior to any that Napoleon could collect at first, and, though the precise plan of the campaign had not yet been definitively settled, something like an understanding as to the general features of it had been arrived at. It was proposed that "the whole force of the allies should enter France between the Rhine and the Sambre: the Prussians composing the centre, the Austrians the left, and the British the right; the Russians acting chiefly as a reserve: this plan having been adopted with a view of making it impossible for Buonaparte to attack them in detail." Lord Harrowby took Ghent on his way back to England to confer with Louis XVIII., who had fled from Paris on Napoleon's approach, and had established his Court in that city. The exiled King seemed cheerful and confident in the success of the efforts about to be made for his restoration, but showed that he did not conceive it to be in his own power to contribute to them. Lord Harrowby mentioned to him that our Government thought it "of great importance that he should be able to raise his own standard in some part of France," meaning in the west or south-west districts, which had always been favorable to the Royalist party. But the disposition of Louis was not energetic, and his intention was fixed to remain at Ghent as long as he could, or, if he should be forced to quit that city, to throw himself into Dunkirk, which he thought in almost any event he should have force enough to defend.

No one, however, had built much on his co-operation, so that Lord Harrowby's report of his intentions caused no disappointment; and how encouraging was the result of all the information which he collected, and which reached the Ministry from other quarters, may be seen in the following letter:

1815]

I should hope, however, that all will be ready before the 1st  
and the 20th of May. The Russians will be in the line at the  
the Maine.

Believe me to be, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

Lord Liverpool's calculation of the time in which the  
allies would be able to commence operations proved very  
nearly correct: Wellington himself was in the last week of April joined the Prussian army at  
Liège as its commander-in-chief. They had not yet met before,  
if they had not felt almost certain to meet till the Austrians had repulsed Murat, crossing the Rhine  
barbary, and were in a position to commence operations  
on the Rhine, and all the plans of Napoleon himself  
could be seen: for it was better to wait than to make  
what might prove to be a false movement. During May  
the British general received reinforcements which raised  
his army to 80,000 men, while that of Blücher was  
acting in conjunction with him was rather larger. As  
in the former war, we were the chief paymasters. We  
agreed to advance five millions to the Austrians, Russians,  
and Prussians: and even his share of this large sum  
did not satisfy Alexander, who tried to obtain another  
million for himself. He failed and is naturally turned  
out, neither his army nor that of the Austrians was  
required to fire a single shot.

By the beginning of June, though contradictory reports  
of all kinds incessantly reached the British headquarters,  
it was sufficiently ascertained that the army with which  
Napoleon intended to commence the campaign was being  
assembled on the frontier of the Netherlands, and was  
only waiting for his arrival from Paris. In deciding on  
this line of operations he was probably influenced by  
the knowledge of the feeling which, as has been men-  
tioned before, a large portion of the Belgians was under-  
lying cherish towards the preservation of the connection

body guard, and his Swiss levies, were the causes of the greatest jealousy and discontent amongst the old regiments.

To look forward, however : I think I know your sentiments well enough to be satisfied that you will be of opinion that we have no other line to adopt than to renew the war against Buonaparte, provided the allies are disposed to embark heartily in the contest. I am happy in being able to assure you that there is not the least doubt on this head. All minor jealousies have been consigned to oblivion, and I should be at a loss to say whether Austria, Russia, or Prussia were most decided for active war, with a view to the destruction of Buonaparte and his power. We trust that by the middle of May all the allied armies will be on the frontier of France : the left (that upon the Upper Rhine) is to be commanded by Prince Schwartzenberg, the centre by Blucher, and the right by the Duke of Wellington. The latter is quite sanguine as to the result, and his residence in Paris has fortunately enabled him to form a tolerably just estimate of the military resources of France at the present crisis.

Whether the re-establishment of Louis XVIII. will follow the downfall of Buonaparte, if it shall be accomplished, is a question of more difficulty. Though we have no right to dictate to France as to the form of their government or the person of their sovereign, we are bound in honour and justice not to countenance any project which is inconsistent with the rights of the legitimate sovereign, and which might be adopted by many as a compromise, if it appeared in any way to be not repugnant to the views of the allies.

The private accounts from Paris are by no means unfavorable. Buonaparte's government is certainly not gaining popularity. He is at present in the hands of the Jacobins, and they are jealous of him. He has great difficulties in augmenting his army and in raising money : at the same time it would be most imprudent to give him more time for preparation than was quite indispensable.

The moment for entering France is a nice question, for we must not begin our operations with an inadequate force, and we must not, on the other hand, delay them an hour longer than is absolutely necessary.



I should hope, however, that all will be ready between the 10th and the 20th of May. The Russians will by that time be on the Maine.

Believe me to be, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

Lord Liverpool's calculation of the time by which the allies would be able to commence operations proved very nearly correct: Wellington himself, and Blucher, who in the last week of April joined the Prussian army at Liège as its commander-in-chief, could have been ready before, if they had not felt almost compelled to wait till the Austrians had repelled Murat's invasion of Lombardy, and were in a position to commence operations on the Rhine, and till the plans of Napoleon himself could be seen; for it was better to wait than to make what might prove to be a false movement. During May the British general received reinforcements which raised his army to 80,000 men; while that of Blucher, who was acting in conjunction with him, was rather larger. As in the former war, we were the chief paymasters. We agreed to advance five millions to the Austrians, Russians, and Prussians: and even his share of this large sum did not satisfy Alexander, who tried to obtain another million for himself. He failed; and, as matters turned out, neither his army nor that of the Austrians was required to fire a single shot.

By the beginning of June, though contradictory reports of all kinds incessantly reached the British head-quarters, it was sufficiently ascertained that the army with which Napoleon intended to commence the campaign was being assembled on the frontier of the Netherlands, and was only waiting for his arrival from Paris. In deciding on this line of operations he was probably influenced by the knowledge of the feeling which, as has been mentioned before, a large portion of the Belgians was understood to cherish towards the preservation of the connection

with France, and towards his own Government, which made it probable that, if he could make himself master of Brussels, the whole population of Brabant would rise in his favour. At the same time no scene of war could have suited Wellington equally well; for in the preceding autumn he had surveyed the whole district, and had specially marked out a tract of champagne country near a village called Waterloo, about fifteen miles from Brussels, as a spot singularly favorable for a battle, if ever it should become necessary to fight one for the defence of the capital of Belgium against a French invasion. But, as Napoleon had the choice of more lines of advance than one, it was still as requisite as ever to abstain from any premature movement which might enable him to turn either of the allied armies which lay between him and his object. At last, on the 12th of June, he left Paris. A letter from Lord Liverpool to Canning, written the next day, before any news of his movements had reached England, nevertheless shows the belief that the decisive moment was at hand; betraying also, though he was not less sanguine of victory than before, an apprehension that a defeat, or even the overthrow, of Napoleon might not terminate the difficulties of the allies, or of the Ministry; since it might only leave the French throne a prize to be scrambled for, and won by the most unscrupulous intriguer. One of the Duke of Wellington's despatches had gone the length of asserting his conviction that, under any circumstances, it would be impossible to restore Louis, though he subsequently saw reason to modify that opinion. The most formidable of the obstacles to such a step are explained in the letter:

Fife House, 13th June, 1815.

MY DEAR CANNING,

I hope you will long ago have recovered from all apprehension about the Princess of Wales. By the last accounts from Italy she had left Genoa for Milan, and intended to pass the summer at one of the villas near the Lago di Como.

You will I doubt not have been most truly gratified by the success which has attended the Austrian operations in Italy. The entire deliverance of Italy at so early a period of the campaign cannot fail to be productive of the most important consequences. The Austrian armies in that quarter will now be disposable, and will probably be enabled to pass the Alps soon after the campaign shall have commenced on the side of the Rhine and of Flanders.

We may now be in daily expectation of hearing that the allied armies have entered France. The operations will probably begin on the Upper Rhine, as the most distant point from Paris; but we know that the Duke of Wellington and Blucher are both ready to move; and fortunately there subsists between them the most perfect union and cordiality.

During the twenty years we have passed in political life we have never witnessed a more awful moment than the present. It is impossible ever to answer for the result of military operations, but the chances are certainly all in our favour. The two great problems appear to me to be whether the authorities at Paris, that is the Jacobins and Constitutionalists, will endeavour to arrest the progress of the allies by overthrowing Buonaparte, and by proposing some compromise as to the internal government of France; and whether, if the allies succeed in again reaching Paris and in replacing Louis XVIII. on the throne, he will be able to maintain himself there.

The latter will be a work of much difficulty. The King is certainly personally popular; Monsieur and the Duc de Berri hated; the Duchesse d'Angoulême respected and pitied, but not beloved; the Duc d'Angoulême rather liked. You will be surprised to hear that our old friend Monsieur is perhaps the most unpopular of the set. This arises from the influence the emigrants have over him, and from his being regarded as the essence of emigration. There appears to me to be a great resemblance between his character and that of many of the princes of the Stuart family. He is a perfect chevalier, but has no quality which belongs to a king or a prince in difficult times. The greatest danger to the old line of Bourbons is from the Duke of Orleans. He is the person to whom all the Jacobins and many of the Constitutionalists look up as a resource in

case of necessity. His guarded conduct at the present moment has created considerable alarm and suspicion amongst the friends of the King. There are some, however, who know him, and who think that, if even he got the better of all principle and sense of duty, he has not resolution enough to play so desperate a game.

It is unlucky that he should be at this time in this country. When we heard that he was coming over, we sent to stop him ; but he arrived without having received our letters, and we could not then send him away.

Our session of Parliament is coming to a close, and, since the struggle on the Corn Bill, we have had no material difficulties to encounter. Upon the war the country, with the exception of the old Opposition, has been nearly unanimous. Lord Grenville, Grattan, and Plunkett have rendered us much service. Were you not surprised at Lord Wellesley adopting the peace policy, and going with the Whigs? I hardly know how to account for it ; for, even supposing it to have been the opinion of any man that, provided the allies were agreed, a defensive system was under all the circumstances to be preferred, the question really was, whether we should take upon ourselves the responsibility of preventing a war against Buonaparte in opposition to the opinion of all Europe, after the manifest violations which had taken place of the treaties of Fontainebleau and of Paris. That we might have prevented the war I do not deny ; but we could not have done so without giving up all hopes of ever rallying Europe again, and without making up our minds to an insulated policy as alone suited to our situation.

I shall be glad to hear when you write again of the state of the health of your eldest son, which I hope has not suffered in consequence of the summer heats. I beg to be kindly remembered to Mrs. Canning, and believe me to be, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

The writer and the world were not kept long in suspense. The events of the next few days have been too repeatedly and minutely related, and are too universally known, to justify a lengthened description of them here. On the 14th Napoleon joined his army. The next day he fell in

with the advanced posts of the Prussians, and drove them back on Charleroi. And, as these movements now made it plain on which line of advance he had determined, Wellington, who had hitherto contented himself with covering every possible road, at once concentrated his army, and pressed forward to support Blucher. On the 16th Napoleon attacked both British and Prussians, with a fortune as different as the genius of his antagonists, at Ligny. He defeated Blucher, the faultiness of whose dispositions had been pointed out by Wellington some hours before the battle, though he could not induce the old marshal to correct them. But Ney, in spite of a great superiority of numbers, was beaten back at Quatre-Bras by Wellington, after a conflict in which the carnage, unusually large in proportion to the numbers engaged, testified to the stubborn resolution with which the field had been contested. The British general indeed could easily have kept the ground he had won, or could even have advanced and renewed the battle the next day, had not his first object been to preserve his communications with Blucher; and as, during the 17th, the Prussians retreated upon Wavre, he also fell back on Waterloo, and prepared to receive Napoleon's attack on the morrow, on the very ground which, as we have seen, he had formerly selected as pre-eminently suitable for such a purpose. The history of war probably affords no other example of a foresight so remarkably realized.

It was only six days after Napoleon had left his recovered capital when, on the morning of the 18th, he moved forward, as he had before expressed it, to measure himself with Wellington. He had slightly the advantage in number, and was greatly superior in the quality of his troops; for scarcely more than a third of those opposed to him were British soldiers, and many thousands were Belgians, who could be trusted neither for steadiness nor for loyalty. In artillery especially he had an enormous preponderance. It remained to be seen whether Wellington's unrivalled

skill as a tactician could counterbalance these formidable disadvantages.<sup>1</sup> Aware of their greatness he had on the 17th warned Blucher that he should certainly be attacked the next morning, and had requested the aid of a Prussian division: and the old prince, though he had been severely hurt on the 16th, promised to bring him not a division only but the whole Prussian army. Nor was it Blucher's fault that, from the difficulties of the ground along which he had to march, he was unable to take part in the battle till it was in fact won. For nearly eight hours Wellington's troops had held their ground against a series of assaults as impetuous and incessant as ever Ney had led or Napoleon directed. Except La Haie Sainte, a farmhouse near their centre, from which the garrison were at last forced to retreat because they had expended their ammunition, they had lost no inch of ground, no square was broken. In one instance their cavalry, though less numerous than that of the French, had even become the assailants in a charge of unparalleled brilliancy and success. But, though the victory was secured before their allies could reach the field, Blucher's exertions were far from fruitless, and he well deserved all the praise which has been bestowed on his indomitable courage; for it was he who completed the rout of the enemy, pressing the pursuit of the broken battalions throughout the night, a task which the troops who had been combating the entire day were too much exhausted to perform.

That the victory so gained was decisive of the contest was seen from the first. Napoleon's defeat was not to be measured by the mere number of his killed and wounded; the whole French army was utterly disorganized and

<sup>1</sup> Marmont, in one of his works, affirms Napoleon to have been very deficient in tactics, or that branch of the military science which consists in handling troops in action, and accounts for his deficiency in that respect by the fact of his never having been commander of a division, a brigade, or even a regiment, but having passed, as if at a bound, from the rank of captain to that of commander-in-chief.

dissipated. Every hour of Blucher's pursuit, which was continued not only with military energy but with personal animosity, ensured their disorder. So that Ney was guilty of no exaggeration when he proclaimed at Paris in the Chamber of Peers that it was "a mere illusion to suppose it possible to make any further resistance, they had been beaten so thoroughly." And in fact, almost as soon as Napoleon, who fled back to Paris from the field of battle, reached the capital, he found that all that was left for him was to make a feeble attempt, by an abdication which no ingenuity could represent as voluntary, to preserve the throne for his son. Meanwhile Wellington, who could only divine what was likely to be done, but who was for some days without intelligence on which he thought it safe to rely, pressed on untiringly to secure, what from the first he had looked on as the primary object of the allied armies, the capture of Paris. He gave his troops one day to recover from their fatigues, and then hastened forward with unsurpassed celerity, scarcely allowing the very strongest forces to delay his advance more than a few hours. Cambrai was taken by escalade; Peronne by storm: and June had not expired before both Wellington and Blucher were encamped under the walls of Paris, for which the most fearless and the most experienced of those veterans to whom its defence, had it been defensible, would have been committed, could only now strive to obtain terms which might in some degree disguise from the citizens their utter prostration and helplessness. Paris surrendered. A provisional government which had been formed resigned its powers by a message to the Chambers that the allies had announced their resolution to replace the King on the throne. And on the 8th of July, the day after Wellington and his army took possession of the city under the capitulation which had been agreed to, Louis made his formal re-entry into his capital; while the next week saw Napoleon, who had fled to Rochfort, but had been baffled in his attempts to escape to America by the

vigilance of our cruisers, a prisoner on board the *Bellerophon*, a British line-of-battle ship which was lying off the harbour.

Nothing was now needed to the completeness and grandeur of our triumph. But, though the events of which we have thus given an outline brought rest to our warriors, they at the same time renewed the toils and anxieties of our statesmen. The variety and great difficulty of the questions which their victory brought before them for solution may be seen in a memorandum which Lord Liverpool drew up for the guidance of Lord Castlereagh, who was returning to Paris to take his personal share in the impending negotiations.

*Memorandum. Most secret and confidential.*

30th June, 1815.

LORD LIVERPOOL to LORD CASTLEREAGH.

In considering the course of policy which it may be expedient for the allies to adopt under the present circumstances, there are obviously three alternatives which present themselves to our view :

- 1st. Louis XVIII. may be restored ; Buonaparte being dead, or a prisoner in the hands of the allies.
- 2dly. Louis XVIII. may be restored ; Buonaparte being still alive, and having escaped to America or elsewhere.
- 3dly. The difficulties in the way of the restoration of Louis XVIII. may have rendered that event, however desirable, impracticable, and it may become therefore necessary to treat with some other Government, as representing the French nation.

Upon the first alternative it will be necessary to consider whether the previous declarations and engagements of the allies compel them to consider the integrity of France, as settled by the Treaty of Paris, as a question concluded by what has already passed ; or whether it will admit of any modifications which it may be judged expedient to adopt, after the experience of the last twelve months, for the general security and permanent tranquillity of Europe.

Upon this point it does not appear possible to give any precise or positive instructions, until we are more particularly informed



of the sentiments of the allies in consequence of the recent events.

On the second alternative it is to be hoped that there would be no difference of opinion. We must all be sensible that, if Buonaparte is alive and at large, we can have no security that he will not again make his appearance in France in the course of a few months, and we may therefore be again involved in a war as critical and burthensome as the present without many advantages which have attended the renewal of the contest at this time. We shall have a clear right, therefore, under such circumstances, to require some additional securities; and although Louis XVIII. should be restored to the throne of France, we should be entitled to provide for the future security of Europe by insisting upon taking from France some of her frontier fortresses, including Lille, and the only modification which should be admitted of this principle, is, that it might perhaps be provided, that, instead of being actually ceded in sovereignty by France to the allies, they should be retained by the allies during the life of Buonaparte, or for a given number of years, and then revert again to France.

With respect to the third alternative, it would leave the discretion of the allies entirely unfettered, and if they cannot have the security for peace arising out of the character of the Government with which it is concluded, they would be fully justified in attempting to obtain it by a reduction of the power and territory of the enemy.

As this alternative, however, is not likely under present circumstances to occur, it does not appear to be necessary to say more upon it. The principle as above laid down cannot possibly be disputed; the expediency of acting upon it to a certain degree will hardly be denied; but the extent to which we may carry it must depend upon contingencies of which at this time we cannot have the means of forming any judgment.

It appears to be quite indispensable, that, in the event of the restoration of Louis XVIII., a severe example should be made of those commanding officers of garrisons or corps who deserted the King and went over to Buonaparte. Such a proceeding is not only become necessary with a view to the con-

tinuance of the power of the House of Bourbon, but likewise for the security of the object for which the allies have been contending, a safe and lasting peace.

The true principle taken in its full regard would be to consider all the officers commanding garrisons or corps as subject to the penalties of high treason who had gone over to Buonaparte previous to the King leaving the French territory ; but it might be as well to modify this principle by confining it to those who took that step before the King was known to have quitted Paris.

Considering the elements for conspiracies and rebellions which must exist in France for some years, there can be no chance of stopping them but by an exemplary punishment on the present occasion of those who were forward to join the standard of Buonaparte.

With respect to the conspirators who were not military, it might be proper likewise to make an example of those who are most dangerous, subjecting the most criminal to the pains of high treason, and those who were less so to that of banishment.

Whilst measures of just severity are adopted with regard to the authors and abettors of the late Revolution, it is of the utmost importance that the King should take the most public measures for allaying the fears of the purchasers of national property. The apprehensions of this class of the King's subjects were productive last year of the very worst effects, and it will be in vain for the King to think that he can consolidate his authority, unless by the security of property as it now exists, without reference to the title by which it was acquired.

The most serious of the difficulties apprehended by Lord Liverpool were, as we have seen, soon removed by the restoration of Louis, but the situation in which our capture of Napoleon placed us created others of a scarcely less perplexing nature. And the other points alluded to, especially the necessity of guarding against France again disturbing the peace of the world, on which was subsequently grafted the idea of stripping her of some of her spoils which, if of less value than provinces, were perhaps even, as being more visible, still more flattering

to the pride of the nation and especially of the Parisians, afforded abundant occupation to our diplomatists for some time.

For neither were the French army nor the French Chambers unanimous or cheerful in their acceptance of the restored Bourbons. The following short note from Lord Castlereagh shows how much management was still required both to preserve tranquillity for the moment, and to soothe the discontented with that sort of acquiescence with which for a time Louis was to content himself as a substitute for loyalty, in the hope that by a conciliatory impartiality he might gradually warm it into attachment :

*Private.*

Paris, 7th July, 1815.

MY DEAR LIVERPOOL,

I send you such private letters as I have received.

There is a good deal of fermentation here, but it will subside.

I consider the King's decision to employ Fouché a great point gained, and his means of acting to have been essential to his Majesty's restoration.

The army is gone off in the worst temper, including some Fédérés and National Guards; they carried with them between 70,000 and 80,000 men. You may estimate the efficient troops at 60,000, of which nearly 15,000 are cavalry.

I understand the Assembly of Representatives is now sitting (12 at night), with closed doors, upon the alternative of dispersing or returning to Orleans. There is a desperate party, but it must end in smoke; the difficulty is not their force, but the absence of force on the King's side.

I fear all prospect of Buonaparte's retreat is now reduced to the chance of capture at sea. The town is quiet.

I am, dear Liverpool,

Ever yours,

CASTLEREAGH.

I never saw the Duke in better health or spirits. The impression towards him and his army is indescribable; the conduct of our troops has been as exemplary on the march as in the field.

One letter from Lord Liverpool crossed this on its way ; and he instantly replied to it in the second of those which are here subjoined :

*Secret and confidential.*

Fife House, 7th July, 1815.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

The Duke of Wellington's letters of the 2d and 4th instant, enclosing the capitulation of Paris, were received last night.

I confess I am glad that Paris has been taken by a military convention rather than by a capitulation to the King, as it will leave us more unfettered as to the conditions on which peace is to be restored. I hope the 12th Article of the Convention has reference only to the foreign military authorities, and is not considered as granting an indemnity to all persons in Paris, whatever their offences may have been against the legal national tribunals, civil or military.

It is in vain to conceal from ourselves that the situation of the King will become very critical as soon as the allied armies are withdrawn from France, and it is even doubtful how far his authority can be established under present circumstances, on such a footing as to secure it against another revolution.

There are three questions which occur to every person one meets, What is to become of Buonaparte? What course is to be adopted with respect to those who assisted him in resuming his authority? What is to be done with the French armies?

If these three points cannot be solved in a satisfactory manner, the country will expect, and justly, I think, expect, further securities for the continuance of peace, and an improved frontier; and they will, above all, expect that, having been at so considerable an expense in the renewal of the war, and having wasted so much of the best blood of the country in the operations of it, we should not lose the hold we have now of France until we have brought the arrangements which may be judged necessary to a satisfactory conclusion. I am not insensible to all the difficulties which must arise in settling so many nice and important points, but we never can hope to have another opportunity of negotiating with so much advantage as at the present moment.

conclude the Emperors and King will come to Paris as soon as they hear of the capitulation ; by that time we shall be able to form some judgment of the probable fate of Buonaparte. If he sails for either Rochfort or Cherbourg, we have a good chance of laying hold of him. If we take him, we shall keep him on board ship till the opinion of the allies has been taken. The most easy course would be to deliver him up to the King of France, who might try him as a rebel, but then we must be quite certain that he must be tried in such a manner as to have no chance of escape ; indeed, nothing would really be necessary but the identification of his person. I have had some conversation with the civilians, and they are of opinion that this would be in all respects the least objectionable course. We should have a right to consider him as a French prisoner, and as such to give him up to the French Government ; they think likewise that the King of France would have a clear right to consider him as a rebel, and to deal with him accordingly.

If it is asked why so much importance is attached to one man, it is because I am thoroughly convinced that no other man can play the same part as he has done, and is likely to play again if he should be allowed the opportunity.

Independent of his personal qualities, he has the advantage of fourteen years' enjoyment of supreme power. This has given him a title which belongs to no other man, and which it would be very difficult for any one to acquire.

I need hardly remind you of the Slave-trade. I should hope Louis XVIII. can have no difficulty in confirming in some way or other what has been done by Buonaparte on this subject. He owes it to us, who will have restored him to his throne ; and indeed, if he does not meet our wishes on this point, I do not see how we ever shall be able to satisfy the country of the sincerity of our exertions.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

*Secret and confidential.*

Fife House, 10th July, 1815.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

I received this morning your letters of the 7th, and Sir Charles Stuart's of the 6th.

The account of the state of Paris, and indeed of a large part of the interior of France, appears to us by no means favorable. Though the general disposition may be in favour of the King in many quarters, it is quite clear that he has no party to support him, and that the most able and active members of the community are against him. It will be a herculean task, I think, to give any real strength to his Government; for what is a King unsupported by opinion, by an army, or by a strong national party? I am glad, upon the whole, that he has determined to employ Fouché. He may betray him, but he may likewise feel it is his best interest to save him. In a desperate state of affairs, we must try desperate remedies. The more I consider the present internal state of France, and the little chance there is of security to Europe from the character and strength of the French Government, the more I am satisfied that we must look for security on the frontier, and in really weakening the power of France. This opinion is rapidly gaining ground in this country, and I think, even if Buonaparte was dead, there would now be considerable disappointment at any peace which left France as she was left by the Treaty of Paris, or even as she was before the Revolution.

Bathurst will write to-night to the Duke of Wellington on the subject of the system of supplying our army. It is quite right to prevent plunder of every description, but France must bear a part of the expenses of the war; this was indeed understood when we agreed to the convention at Ghent, and we shall not be able to justify the system which we adopted last year, either to our own country or to our allies. We do not exactly know what course in this respect the Duke of Wellington has been following, for we have received no information in regard to it since he entered France. I trust, however, that you will be able to satisfy him that the French nation ought to bear a part of the expense, and we should take care that this part of the charge is defrayed before we leave the country, for otherwise we shall certainly gain nothing.

We have our council to-morrow for the Prince Regent's speech, and Parliament will be prorogued on Wednesday.

I conclude we shall hear by the next courier whether the allied

sovereigns intend coming to Paris, or what place is fixed for the general discussions on political affairs.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

Perhaps no one circumstance shows more strikingly the extreme difficulty of the position of Louis himself than his consent to take Fouché into his service, and the approval of that step which is expressed in these letters by such men as our ministers. And, as we see from the last of them, their increasing conviction of the weakness under which all governmental authority in France must labour for a time intensified their feeling of the necessity of guarding against a renewal of any national outbreak. Such precautions were as much for the interest of Louis and the French people themselves as for that of the allies; but it was a task which required great circumspection on the part of those who, like our own ministers, desired to combine what was due to Europe at large with what was due to the King whom we had replaced on his throne, and, therefore, to avoid the slightest appearance of degrading or distrusting his authority. For the slightest exhibition of such a feeling on our part could only tend to diminish or destroy the respect felt for him by his own people, without which there could be no solid foundation or security for his throne. And one measure on which Lord Liverpool had decided, in spite of its obvious justice, was sure to create a certain degree of unpopularity for the restored dynasty by the contest which it would unavoidably provoke between the old empire and the re-established kingship. Our difficulties were increased by the conduct of our allies, especially the Prussians, who, in their conduct both in Paris and the rural districts, were displaying an ostentatiously vindictive spirit, as if they were not only resolved to make Paris pay for the indignities which Napoleon had inflicted on Berlin, but as if they hoped also to efface the memory of the baseness with which they had subsequently become his allies in the hope

of obtaining from him a share of the King of England's Hanoverian territories as the price of the submission. Not only did Blucher make preparations for blowing up the bridge of Jena because its name commemorated the defeat of his country, an exploit which could only be prevented by the remonstrances of Wellington, and the knowledge that those remonstrances would, if necessary, be backed up by active force ; but he allowed his troops to straggle over the whole country, plundering and destroying, till Wellington was forced to make a formal representation to Lord Castlereagh that "if the useless, and, if it were not likely to be attended with such dangerous consequences, he should call it ridiculous oppression practised on the French people, were not put a stop to, the whole country would be set against the allies, and a national war excited. He was certain that they were getting into a very critical state, and that if one shot were fired in Paris the whole country would rise in arms against them." The extent to which the Prussian troops and others were ravaging the country was productive of no slight inconvenience to himself, since it often made it difficult to obtain the supplies necessary for his own army ; while it excited also such a feeling of hatred against both the allies that more than one attempt was made to assassinate his own officers in the streets of Paris.

The resolute remonstrances which Lord Castlereagh addressed to the Prussian commander-in-chief diminished, if they did not wholly put a stop to, the outrages of which the duke complained. But, while it was becoming in us to protect the French from lawless outrage, it was felt to be equally proper to visit them with some formal chastisement for the eagerness which they had shown to desert their legitimate King, and to enable the usurper again to disturb the peace of the world. And with this feeling Lord Liverpool bethought himself of a penalty which might fairly be inflicted on them, though, if properly viewed, it was no penalty at all, but only the enforcement of a proper restitution of unauthorised and unprecedented plunder. Of



the three following letters, all written on the same day, two refer to the topics to which allusion has been made, precautions for the future, and chastisement for the past; and the third to the probability of Napoleon's capture, which, as it happened, took place the same day that Lord Liverpool's letter reached Paris :

*Secret and confidential.*

Fife House, July 15th, 1815.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

Amongst other matters, I have been particularly directed by the Prince Regent to call your attention to the collection of statues and pictures of which the French plundered Italy, Germany, and the Low Countries. Whatever it may be fitting to do with them, whether to restore them to the countries from which they have been taken, or to divide them amongst the allies, the allied armies have the same title to them by conquest as that by which the French authorities acquired them. It is most desirable, in point of policy, to remove them if possible from France, as whilst in that country they must necessarily have the effect of keeping up the remembrance of their former conquests, and of cherishing the military spirit and vanity of the nation.

I recommend this matter likewise to your serious and early consideration. You will let me know at the proper time what appear to be the sentiments of the other allied sovereigns with regard to it.

Believe me, yours, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

*Secret and confidential.*

Fife House, July 15th, 1815.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

We have had a long sitting this day on the several despatches which have been received from you since your arrival at Paris. It is satisfactory to find that the Emperor of Russia is in so reasonable a state of mind, and likely to co-operate with us cordially in the great objects we must all equally have in view. The more we consider the various circumstances which have attended the return of the King of France to Paris, the more strongly are we impressed with the opinion of the impossibility of giving that strength to his Government which can afford any real security to the allies or to Europe. The forbearance

manifested at the present moment can be considered in no other light than as weakness, and not mercy ; and, though the King may follow the advice which has been given to him by disbanding his army, I am afraid that very little dependence will be to be placed on any army formed out of the same materials ; and, if an army could even be otherwise constituted, what dangers might not be apprehended from 40,000 officers, unemployed men of desperate fortunes, and possessing a large proportion of the talents and energy of the country ? A severe example made of the conspirators who brought back Buonaparte could alone have any effect in counteracting these dangers ; but this is not now to be expected, and perhaps would have been very difficult considering the share in the Government which the King has been obliged to assign to some of the members of the Jacobin party.

In this state of things we must look to other measures for our security, and we shall never be forgiven if we leave France without securing a sufficient frontier for the protection of the adjoining country. The prevailing idea in this country is, that we are fairly entitled to avail ourselves of the present moment to take back from France the principal conquests of Louis XIV. It is argued, with much force, that France never will forgive the humiliation which she has already received, that she will take the first convenient opportunity of endeavouring to redeem her military glory, and that it is our duty therefore to take advantage of the present moment to prevent the evil consequences which may even flow from the greatness of our own success. It might have been not unwise last year to try the effect of a more magnanimous policy ; but in the result of that we have been completely disappointed, and we owe it to ourselves now to provide in the best manner we can for our own security.

These, I can assure you, are the generally received opinions in this country at present, and I think it is material that you should sound our allies with respect to them.

If, however, you should find them not disposed to proceed to such lengths, we think we are completely entitled to an arrangement upon the principle which I am about to state, and indeed their interests will be found as much involved in it as our own.

Suppose Buonaparte to be dead, or a prisoner in the hands of the allies, we might be induced to waive any permanent cession of territory on the part of France upon the following conditions :

1st. That a considerable part of the northern barrier of France, including Lille, should be placed in the hands of the allied Powers until such time as a sufficient barrier for the Netherlands was completed, and the expense thereof defrayed by the French Government. The period of seven or five years, as the Duke of Wellington might judge necessary, might be definitively fixed as the time for completing this barrier, and the sum of five millions as the expense. The French fortresses to be restored at the time fixed, or as soon after as the money should be paid, to Louis XVIII., or to his descendants in line direct, but to no other sovereign of France.

2dly. The same principle to be applied, in such degree as the allies may think proper, to the eastern frontier of France.

If Buonaparte should escape, and should therefore be alive and at liberty, the French frontier above alluded to should be retained during his life, as well as during the time necessary for erecting the new frontier, and for the liquidation of the expenses of it.

These propositions appear to be founded upon a principle perfectly equitable. The French nation is at the mercy of the allies in consequence of a war occasioned by their violation of the most sacred treaties : the allies are fully entitled, under those circumstances, to indemnity and security. We might not unreasonably claim a security that was permanent, such as France has so frequently enforced under similar circumstances, but we are content to limit the extent of the security to the necessity of the case ; and having delivered the adjoining territories from invasion, and being in occupation of a considerable part of the kingdom of France, we feel that we have a right to retain such part of the kingdom of France as is necessary for the security of the adjoining countries until that security shall have been provided for in another manner, and the enemy has defrayed the expense of it.

This arrangement would have the advantage likewise of affording some security to the Government of the King of France, as the restoration of the fortresses would be limited to him, and to his legitimate successors.

I sincerely believe that this proposition would be far short of the expectations of the country at this time, but I state it to you on the part of the Cabinet, as one which we are convinced, under all the circumstances, is reasonable in itself as the lowest point to which we ought to go, and as one to which, we have little doubt, after all the expense they have incurred, and the dangers to to which they may hereafter be exposed, our allies may be reconciled.

Believe me, yours, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

*Secret and confidential.*

Fife House, July 15th, 1815.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

We have received this morning your despatches of the 12th inst. Before I enter on other matters, I am desirous of apprising you of our sentiments respecting Buonaparte. If you should succeed in getting possession of his person, and the King of France does not feel himself sufficiently strong to bring him to justice as a rebel, we are ready to take upon ourselves the custody of his person on the part of the allied Powers, and, indeed, we should think it better that he should be assigned to us than to any other member of the confederacy. In this case, however, we should prefer that there were not commissioners appointed on the part of the other Powers, but that the discretion should be vested entirely in ourselves; and that we should be at liberty to fix the place of his confinement either in Great Britain, or at Gibraltar, Malta, St. Helena, the Cape of Good Hope, or any other colony we might think most secure.

We incline at present strongly to the opinion that the best place of custody would be at a distance from Europe, and that the Cape of Good Hope, or St. Helena, would be the most proper stations for the purpose.

If, however, we are to have the severe responsibility of such a charge, it is but just that we should have the choice of the place of confinement, and a complete discretion as to the means necessary to render that confinement effectual.

Believe me, yours, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

Of not only the expediency and propriety, but of the strict justice of the measure mentioned in the first of these letters, it is strange that any question should ever have arisen; and yet it was one which those who were not to gain by it were at first generally disposed to view with disfavour. Vienna had not been despoiled of any treasures of art; Petersburg had never been in the possession of a French army; and neither the Austrian nor the Russian Emperor were inclined to visit France with a deprivation which she would feel as an indignity, and which yet, as they argued, would in no degree diminish the resources by which she was formidable. Their scruples on the prudence of the measure, as one which was likely to make the restored King unpopular, were shared by the Duke of Wellington, and in some degree by Lord Castlereagh himself. But, as soon as Lord Liverpool's proposal was known, it was supported eagerly by Prussia, by Spain, by the Pope, and by all the minor states which had been pillaged of the treasures which had been so long their pride; and reflection gradually convinced those who at first opposed it of the reasonableness of the restitution. Many wrongs are done in war which admit of no subsequent undoing or reversal; but if, where such cannot be undone, it is right to make reparation, it must be far more right, when the circumstances admit, to make restitution. While, on the other hand, if the original seizure of the different works of art by Napoleon was no wrong, but a legitimate result of victory, the same right of conquest which transferred the pictures and statues of the Italian galleries to the Louvre might fairly be invoked to restore them now that France was the conquered instead of the conqueror. The second letter indicates the policy that the British Cabinet, which on such matters, especially while Lord Castlereagh was absent, was entirely guided by Lord Liverpool himself, had decided on as that which ought to regulate the conditions of the treaty of peace which must soon come under discussion. It bears the same character of moderation which so honorably distinguished the British councils during every negotiation

of the kind. The third related to Napoleon himself; and, if a smile should be provoked by the allusion to the idea of Louis treating him as a rebel, it must be remembered that Blucher had openly threatened to put him to death if he fell into his hands, even inviting Wellington's approval and assistance: and that, unless common report and general belief were greatly mistaken, Blucher's sovereign and the Emperor of Russia still favoured such a method of dealing with him. Blucher professed to find a justification for his design in the circumstance that the Congress at Vienna had declared him an outlaw, a declaration which, though it could bear no such interpretation as the old marshal sought to affix to it, was nevertheless an absurdity when pronounced respecting an independent sovereign, as all the Powers, except ourselves, had acknowledged Napoleon to be. It affords, indeed, a singular proof of the degree in which portions of Napoleon's conduct had roused against him a feeling of personal animosity, that any opinion given by civilians that such a proceeding was compatible with the letter of the law could have induced a statesman like Lord Liverpool to contemplate it for a moment. Yet he was slow to abandon it, as we see from the following letter produced by the intelligence, which reached England a day or two afterwards, that Napoleon was actually a prisoner on board our fleet:

*Secret and confidential.*

Fife House, 20th July, 1815.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

I have this moment received your letters of the 17th inst. with the intelligence of the surrender of Buonaparte, of which I wish you joy.

When your letter was written, you had evidently not read mine of the 15th, which will explain to you the sentiments of Government on the subject of his detention. We are all decidedly of opinion that it would not answer to confine him in this country. Very nice legal questions might arise upon the subject, which would be particularly embarrassing; but, independent of these considerations, you know enough of the feelings of people in this country not to doubt that he would become an object of

curiosity immediately, and possibly of compassion in the course of a few months; and the very circumstances of his being here, or indeed anywhere else in Europe, would contribute to keep up a certain degree of ferment in France.

Since I wrote to you last, Lord Melville and myself have conversed with Mr. Barrow<sup>1</sup> on the subject, and he decidedly recommends St. Helena as the place in the world the best calculated for the confinement of such a person. There is a very fine citadel there in which he might reside; the situation is particularly healthy; there is only one place in the circuit of the island where ships can anchor, and we have the power of excluding neutral vessels altogether, if we should think it necessary.

At such a distance, and in such a place, all intrigue would be impossible; and, being withdrawn so far from the European world, he would very soon be forgotten.

We are very much disinclined to the appointment of commissioners on the part of the other Powers. Such an arrangement might be unobjectionable for a few months, but when several persons of this description got together in a place in which they had nothing to do, and of which they would very soon be tired, they would be very likely to quarrel amongst themselves, and the existence of any disputes amongst them might seriously embarrass the safe custody of the prisoner.

To conclude: we wish that the King of France would hang or shoot Buonaparte, as the best termination of the business; but if this is impracticable, and the allies are desirous that we should have the custody of him, it is not unreasonable that we should be allowed to judge of the means by which that custody can be made effectual.

Believe me to be, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

As Napoleon had been taken by us without the co-operation of any other Power, it clearly belonged to us alone to settle the place and principle of his detention. St. Helena was chosen as the place, chiefly for the reason mentioned in another letter from Lord Liverpool to Lord Castlereagh, that "while it was indispensable to prevent

<sup>1</sup> Secretary to the Admiralty, afterwards Sir J. Barrow.

the approach of any vessels which might afford him the means of escape, it was perhaps the only place in the world from which neutrals could be excluded without inconvenience." And the principle, as far as our allies were concerned, was laid down in the same letter, that, though we alone were to have the custody of him, he was so far to be considered "the *common* prisoner of all, that we should not give him up or release him except by joint consent." Still, though the way of dealing with him was thus determined on, the case was not freed from the legal difficulties to which the letter of the 20th alludes by his removal to a distant country. Fortunately for all, everything in England must be looked at by the executive authorities from a strictly legal point of view; and, to those who thus regarded the question of Napoleon's detention, it seemed doubtful on what grounds the treatment we had fixed on for him should be explained and justified. It was indeed a question of such difficulty that it engaged the attention of our ablest lawyers, and failed to elicit an unanimous decision. There were persons, for Napoleon still possessed some unblushing advocates in this country, who fancied themselves able to put the Government in a difficulty which it had not foreseen, and to force his prisoner out of the admiral's hands by the aid of the Lord Chief Justice. One man entered a cause for trial in the Court of Queen's Bench, procured a subpœna to Napoleon to appear as a witness in it in the ensuing November, and took a boat at Plymouth in order to board the *Northumberland*, in which Napoleon was confined, and serve the writ on him in person; and complained bitterly of the Admiral Lord Keith, who peremptorily prohibited the boat from approaching the ship, and made no secret of his intention to fire upon and sink her if she disobeyed his order.

So absurd an attempt to trick the nation out of its prisoner by the misuse of its own laws could only be laughed at. The real difficulties of the case were those indicated in the following extracts from letters in which



Lord Liverpool consulted the Lord Chancellor, and in which Lord Eldon himself explained his views to his brother Lord Stowell; Lord Liverpool, as the minister of Britain, taking a view of Napoleon's position which Lord Castlereagh's modified acceptance of the Treaty of Fontainebleau justified him in entertaining, but which could, as we have said, be advanced by the representative of no other nation. As he put it to Lord Eldon, "Before Napoleon quitted Elba he enjoyed only a limited and conditional sovereignty, which ceased when the condition on which he held it was violated. In what character, then, did he make war on the King of France, our ally? Not as an *independent* sovereign, for he had no such character; not as a pretender to the crown of France, for he had absolutely and entirely renounced all claim of this description. He must then revert either to his *original* character of a French subject, or he had no character at all, and headed his expedition as an outlaw and an outcast—*hostis humani generis*."<sup>1</sup> It seems too plain to admit of a doubt that Lord Liverpool was going too far when he thus denied Napoleon's right to make war upon Louis as an independent sovereign. For, though we might refuse him that character, Louis certainly could not; and any complaint of his hostile act must manifestly come in the first instance from Louis, whom he attacked, and not from us, who only interfered as that prince's ally; nor in the Treaty of Fontainebleau, as it is usually called, though in fact it was concluded at Paris, is a single article to be found which justifies the assertion that he enjoyed only a conditional sovereignty. On the contrary, the words of the treaty expressly agree that "Elba should form during his life a separate principality, which should be possessed by him in full sovereignty and property."<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the very terms of Lord Castlereagh's accession to the treaty bound even ourselves to "so much as concerned the free possession

<sup>1</sup> See Twiss's Life of Eldon, ii. 270.

<sup>2</sup> Papers relating to the Negotiations, &c. (Parliamentary Debates, xxviii. 201.)

and peaceable enjoyment in full sovereignty of the island of Elba," &c. But Lord Liverpool had in this instance apparently been misled by an expression of the Master of the Rolls, Sir William Grant, that we "had the choice of considering Napoleon either as a French subject, or as a captain of freebooters or banditti, and consequently out of the pale of protection of nations." Sir William Grant was a lawyer of so brilliant a capacity and so sound a judgment that any opinion of his, if deliberately expressed, could not fail to carry great weight. But Lord Eldon looked on these words of his as merely so much loose inconsiderate conversation, and in a very elaborate argument shows clearly that since the treaty by which Napoleon had become Emperor of Elba he could not certainly be a subject of France, nor could he owe any allegiance to Louis; for that treaty "was made with him as abdicating sovereign of France, and it clothed him with the character of Emperor of Elba, with imperial dignity and imperial revenues." He proceeds to raise other questions which we may well pass over, since it seems almost impossible that a similar case for which that of Napoleon might form a precedent should ever occur; but his final conclusion is that he was "a prisoner of war. If we could keep him as a prisoner of war for a moment, we could keep him until some peace was made with him or including him."

This was his view as a lawyer of a case for which no law had or could have provided. In another letter he speaks less as a lawyer and more as a minister. "I believe it will turn out that, if you cannot make this a *casus exceptionis* or *casus omissus* in the law of nations, founded upon necessity, you will not know what to say upon it. *Salus Reipublicæ suprema lex*, as to one state. *Salus omnium Reipublicæ* must be the *suprema lex* as to this case." Lord Liverpool had closed his letter of enquiry with the expression of a belief that, in whatever way the subject was viewed, "it would be desirable to have an Act of Parliament to settle any doubts which might arise." And this was the course ultimately adopted, a bill to authorise the detention of Napoleon at

St. Helena being passed the next year with only one dissentient voice, that of Lord Holland, in the two Houses.

But, though the safe disposal of him whose incurable fondness of war rendered his freedom of person and action incompatible with the tranquillity of the world was the question which most imperatively claimed instant decision, there were others which were of quite equal importance in their bearing on the permanence of peace, and which made still greater demands on the judgment, prudence, address, and firmness of our ministers. On the subject of the detention of Napoleon all the allies agreed ; but on the other questions which rose out of his second overthrow there was, as in the preceding year, an incessant conflict of interests and pretensions, which it was no easy task to reconcile with the object which all professed to desire, the re-establishment of peace on a solid and durable foundation. Nor could it be denied that the late war, brief as it had been, supplied a plausible if not an irresistible argument in favour of those who contended that the treaties of 1814 had left France too much power of becoming formidable, and that it was necessary for the common safety to inflict on her some additional deprivation of territory, and that the nation itself, by its unanimous and precipitate revolt from the Bourbons to Buonaparte, had shown itself deserving of punishment. The consideration which chiefly opposed itself to the proposal to visit France with too severe a chastisement was that it might very probably be found to fall most heavily on the King himself, who was certainly guiltless, but whose position was now notoriously surrounded by difficulties far greater than those which had beset him on his first restoration ; and was likely to be painfully and dangerously aggravated by any measures which might seem to connect his second restoration with a loss of power and dignity to the nation. If he had been the second time re-established on his throne, because such a step appeared to promise the best security for peace, it was obvious that the same object must lead those who so

re-established him to desire to see his Government strong, and equally obvious that to make him unpopular was to weaken it.

It was our part once more to act as the mediator between these opposing principles. We had even less personal interest in the impending arrangements than we had had in the preceding year: then we had conquests which, if we pleased, we might restore, as in fact it has been seen that we did. But in a war which began and ended in a single week we had had no time to recommence our acquisitions. Still less had we anything, even Hanover, to recover, so that our interposition bore with it more dignity and authority than ever. And eventually the chief arrangements were decided on, as will be seen from Lord Liverpool's letters, in nearly complete deference to and conformity with the views which he entertained, and in which his judgment was cordially followed by his Cabinet. In one most important point the task of our diplomatists was easier than it had been a year ago. Alexander of Russia, though as self-important as ever, as much addicted to grandiloquent boasting, and as eager as ever to put himself forward as the potentate to whose influence France and her king must be chiefly indebted for the happy settlement of their affairs, was no longer inclined to embroil the negotiations by any demands for a further extension of his territories. It may be said that he hardly could do so in this instance, since the only provinces of which it was possible to deprive France lay too far from and too completely separated from his own dominions to be of the slightest value to him: but, if he had not learnt moderation from the resistance which he then encountered, he might have sought to make Prussia pay by cessions in her eastern provinces for acquisitions which she was now claiming beyond the Rhine, and any such pretensions on his part would have reopened the angry discussions of the past winter. But Austria and Prussia showed no such forbearance. Austria desired to reclaim provinces which had been separated from her for generations: Alsace, one

of the earliest conquests of Louis XIV., and Lorraine, the inheritance of Marie Leczinska ; while Prussia coveted an extensive strip of the French territory lying along the frontier of her own Rhenish provinces, with some fortresses and districts which were not French possessions, such as Mayence and Luxemburg. These pretensions, however, met with a most strenuous opponent in the Czar. As in the preceding year he had supported and justified the rapacity of Prussia by his own, so now he desired to make her follow the example of his own moderation ; and his minister drew up a memorial insisting on the duty of the allies to content themselves with the arrangements of the Treaty of Paris in 1814, and to exact no further sacrifices from France in punishment of Napoleon's last enterprise. Our statesmen agreed with neither party ; they saw clearly that in such a case as that before them too great forbearance was as unreasonable as an excessive thirst for aggrandizement, and they took a middle path. They judged it both just and politic to prove to France that she was a loser by her love of war. They also felt it necessary to study the feelings of their own countrymen, who were not so elated at the splendour of their triumph as to have laid aside their indignation at the wantonness with which the war had been provoked ; and who, as Lord Liverpool wrote to Lord Castlereagh, "would be grievously disappointed by the unqualified acknowledgment of the integrity of the French territory." They therefore were resolved that France should lose something ; but they limited their notions of what it was both just and politic to require to a much smaller surrender of territory on the part of France than that demanded by their German allies, proposing to obtain the necessary security against any fresh outbreak on her part by a temporary occupation of a portion of the fortresses on her north-western frontier. The entire general views of our Cabinet on the subject will be best seen in the following letters, the first of which is remarkable as showing how

real were the apprehensions that France was not yet wholly subdued ; but that there still survived among the veterans of Napoleon of every rank a feeling of restless discontent which wanted but an opportunity to break forth.<sup>1</sup>

Fife House, July 20th, 1815.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

The measures which the French Government have adopted for the purpose of disbanding the armies appear to be very slow in their progress, and by no means satisfactory in their result. We feel it necessary, therefore, to desire that you will direct the attention of the allies to the very important question of denouncing the armistice as to all those corps which remain embodied. We ought not to forget that the season of the year is advancing, and that military operations will not be as easy two months hence as they are at present. Besides, the French nation will begin to recover from its first panic, and may find the means of more effectual resistance, particularly when supported by a National Representation, and assisted by long nights, and wet or cold weather.

Whatever therefore is to be done for dispersing the army should be done without loss of time. We shall send the Duke of Wellington reinforcements, as if he was going immediately to take the field. The return of the troops from America has been most opportune, and he will certainly soon have, if he has not already, an army considerably more numerous and efficient than that with which he fought the battle of Waterloo. I have no doubt that you have been seriously considering with him all the different contingencies which may occur in the course of the next few months, and that he will be prepared for events as they arise. It is very material that you should look sharply after the northern fortresses. If the means were in our power of occupying them, in case of necessity, I should not dread anything that could happen.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

<sup>1</sup> In the course of the autumn, the old French army was broken up, and re-organized by the old Marshal St. Cyr, now Minister of War to Louis XVIII.

Fife House, July 28th, 1815.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

We have received and considered your despatch of the 24th inst. We are not at all surprised at the different shades of opinion which subsist amongst the allied Powers as to the measures which it may be proper to adopt respecting the frontier of France. It is quite natural that the Powers bordering on France should look to their own security in some permanent reduction of the territory of that country.

It is quite intelligible likewise that the Emperor of Russia should be desirous of being considered as a protector of the French nation; but this disposition on the part of his Imperial Majesty should be kept within reasonable bounds. He should recollect that those who are near to France, and consequently in that post of danger, have the deepest interest in the issue of the contest; and, though it may be very proper that he should so far act the part of a mediator as to keep down extravagant and unreasonable pretensions, he ought not to sacrifice what may be necessary for the security of his allies to the unfounded pretensions of the French nation, particularly as that nation has never acted upon those principles of permanent territorial integrity with respect to other countries, when the fortune of war has placed the power in its own hands.

With regard to the two alternatives of dismantling the French fortresses, or their occupation for a given number of years by the allied Powers, there appears to us to be no question which of these propositions is the most advantageous to Europe, and even to France.

In the first place, the dismantling of fortresses has rarely ever been completely effected. The works are partially destroyed, and may be restored for a small part of the expense at which they had been originally constructed.

In the second place, though dismantling the fortresses on the frontier of France would uncover that country and expose it for a time more easily to invasion (an advantage as far as it goes), it would not materially protect the neighbouring countries which have no fortresses; and the contest, if it should arise, would depend in that case upon which Power could bring into

the field the superior army ; whereas, if the French fortresses were occupied by the allied Powers till such time as a barrier could be erected, the allies would have the advantage of the security of the French frontier till such time as they had been enabled to create one for their own use.

In the third place, the occupation of the French fortresses by the allies, to be restored at a given period to the King and his legitimate successors, would be some security for the continuance of his Government ; whereas the dismantling the fortresses could not be productive, at least in anything like the same degree, of such an advantage.

If, therefore, the principle of security ought to be the rule of our conduct, the option between these alternatives is clear.

We do not feel that we should discharge our duty if we did not urge this opinion upon you with all possible earnestness, and desire you to urge it upon the allies.

We are strongly impressed with the idea that the continuance of the King of France's Government and authority, after the evacuation of the country by the allies, must be very problematical ; and, if his Government should then be overturned, and be followed by a Jacobin or Revolutionary system, though not that of Buonaparte, what will be thought of those who, with France at their mercy, had left that country entire in point of territory, enriched by all the plunder of Italy, Germany, and Flanders, and had provided no additional security for the rest of Europe, though, in the instance of the Low Countries, such security is admitted to be indispensably necessary ?

With respect to the management of this important question, you must certainly be the best judge of the time when it may be most proper to bring it forward ; but we cannot but see the most serious inconvenience in delay. The French ministers will use all their arts to gain an influence over the Emperor of Russia, and we think it may be of the utmost importance that there should be some understanding amongst the great Powers on the *principle* at least which it is intended to adopt before his Imperial Majesty, or any of the other Powers, have committed themselves to the French Government.

We think it likewise of great consequence that our policy in this respect should be decided before the meeting of the new



Assemblies at Paris, and before indeed there can have been time for any serious agitation of the question in any way amongst the French public.

The first act of the new Assemblies will, I have no doubt, be to commit themselves upon some national questions. They will find it much more easy to do this with respect to points on which the allies have decided nothing, than on those on which they have already pronounced themselves; and the allies on the other hand will find it much more difficult to resist such declarations as to matters on which they have announced no intention than as to those on which they have already decided.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH, Fife House, August 3d, 1815.

I send you an official memorandum in consequence of the Russian papers transmitted in your despatch, No. 21. Although the reasoning, in some respects, differs from that of the Russian minister, I trust it will be found that there will be no practical difference in our conclusions. But I am convinced that we have not overstated the just pretensions arising out of our situation, and that it will be by not underrating them that we shall have the best chance of bringing the French Government to agree to the arrangement which is proposed, and which is as advantageous to the permanent authority of the King of France as for the general security of Europe.

Believe me, yours, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

*Enclosure.*

There is so much obscurity in some parts of the Russian memorandum, and many of the points which are brought forward are stated with so little precision, that the Prince Régent's ministers are not satisfied that they rightly understand the bearing of them. If the French nation had answered to the call which was made upon them by the declarations which were issued from Vienna in the months of March and May, and had materially contributed to the overthrow of the system of Buonaparte, the allied Powers might fairly have been held to be bound by the Treaty of Paris, and could certainly not have claimed any

permanent acquisition from France on the principle of conquest ; but when it is considered how great has been the sacrifice of blood and treasure with which the operations of the allies have been attended ; that the King of France has, in fact, been established in his capital by the allied arms ; that almost every fortress continued its resistance as long as any hope of relief could have existed ; and that the occupation of the country by the allied armies north of the Loire is really an occupation in consequence of conquest : there can be no doubt that, within just limits, the allies are entitled to the treaty of conquest, and therefore to such permanent acquisitions as they might deem necessary for their own security. Whether they will act up to this principle is a question of policy and prudence, but it is desirable that this should not be considered as a mere abstract distinction ; for, though they may not be disposed to press the application of the principle of permanent acquisition, if the French Government are ready to agree to a satisfactory arrangement upon other principles, it is very material that it should be held out as that to which the allies have a right to revert, in case the unreasonable expectations of the French Government should leave them no other alternative.

To come, however, to the practical result of the paper. The Prince Regent's Government have no difficulty in acquiescing in the Russian propositions, provided they are correctly understood in the following sense :

- 1st. In the present convulsed state of France, no Government whatever, not even that of Louis XVIII., can in itself afford to the allies, and to Europe, that security which they are entitled to expect.
- 2dly. This security must in part be obtained therefore by diminishing the means of aggression possessed by the French nation, either through permanent acquisitions of territory by the allies, or by the temporary occupation of a military line within the country.
- 3dly. If the allies are willing, under all the circumstances, to waive the demand of any permanent cession of territory, and consequently to acknowledge the integrity of the kingdom of France as it existed before the Revolution, or as it was settled by the Treaty of Paris, it must be on the express condition that the

French Government agrees to the occupation by the allies of a part of the frontier of France, including some of the fortresses of the first and second order, until such time as a barrier can be created for the protection of the neighbouring countries, and until the expense of it has been defrayed by the French Government.

4thly. It is not unreasonable that the French Government should expect that the contribution which they are to pay should be fixed in its amount, and that, provided it is duly paid, the time for the occupation of their frontier should be limited.

It might be stipulated, therefore, that the amount of the contribution should be sufficient to pay for the expense of the new frontier, and the occupation of the French fortresses in the meantime, and that the time for occupying the frontier, provided the contribution was paid, should not exceed five or seven years.

5thly. In order to secure as far as possible the continuance of the legitimate authority in France, it should be provided that the allies were only bound to restore the parts of the frontier of France which they are admitted to occupy to Louis XVIII. and his successors by rightful inheritance.

6thly. The French frontier should be occupied by the forces of the neighbouring Powers; but the French Government should have the advantage of the guarantee of those Powers which do not occupy the frontier, that the territory will be restored at the time limited, upon the conditions which have been stipulated being duly performed.

The Prince Regent's ministers are inclined to believe (notwithstanding the ambiguity which pervades the Russian paper) that the summary of principles above laid down is conformable to the intentions of the Emperor of Russia meant to be set forth in that paper.

If they are not mistaken in this respect, an arrangement founded upon a fair application of these principles will, as far as regards the question of territory, be perfectly satisfactory to the Prince Regent's Government. But the value of the arrangement will essentially depend on the strength of the military positions which the allies are to occupy. It is of the utmost importance to the Low Countries that Lille should be one of them; and as

the arrangement, after being agreed to in principle, might be defeated in detail, by providing military positions inadequate for the three great objects for which they were intended : viz. security for the neighbouring countries against aggression ; indemnity for the expense of the new barrier ; and the more effectual maintenance of the legitimate monarchy in France : it appears to be very desirable that there should be, as soon as practicable, an understanding with the allies as to the mode in which it is intended to carry these principles into effect. .

*Private and confidential.*

Fife House, August 11th, 1815.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

We have received your despatch (No. 27) of the 3d inst., with the enclosed memorandum from the Duke of Wellington on the subject of the military proposition to be made by the allies to the French Government.

With respect to the two projects contained in this memorandum for the occupation of the French frontier, we are disposed on every account to place entire confidence in whatever may be the ultimate military judgment of the Duke of Wellington upon them.

However desirous we may be of seeing the Government of Louis XVIII. popular in France, we do not feel that we should be justified in endeavouring to accomplish that object by the sacrifice of anything which is judged important for the general security of Europe.

We doubt very much whether forbearance on the part of the allies would really have the effect, under the present circumstances, of rendering the King popular, and we are decidedly of opinion that we may thereby deprive ourselves of the means of giving that support to him on which for some time his authority must essentially depend. We wish therefore that this question may be considered on military principles, and decided according to the best view that can be taken of what is likely to contribute most to the general security.

Whilst we are ready to leave it to your discretion not to insist on the occupation of Lille, if it shall be the opinion of the Duke of Wellington that the object of the allies can be better, or as well, accomplished without it, we are nevertheless of opinion that Lille should in the first instance be demanded from the

French Government, and that we ought only to give up our claim to it upon the French Government consenting to an arrangement which shall be considered in other respects as entirely satisfactory.

As we have not yet seen the Austrian or Prussian projects, we do not know the extent of the views of those Governments, but we are informed that they propose to a certain degree the principle of permanent cessions by France, at least as far as regards the external line of fortresses. We ought not to forget that these Governments have more of common interest with us in the whole of this question than the Government of Russia; and, though we must all have deeply at heart the consolidation of the legitimate Government in France, we should consider that our success in this object must necessarily be very uncertain, and that the security of the neighbouring countries against France may be much more easily attained than the rendering France orderly and pacific.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

The force of our argument in favour of exacting some sacrifices from France was so obvious, that by the middle of August Lord Castlereagh was able to announce to Lord Liverpool that even Alexander had expressed his approval of the chief part of our proposal. "It was due," he said, "to the Emperor to acknowledge that he had not shown himself disinclined, after fair discussion, to the adoption of such measures of salutary precaution as had been proposed to him; and he (Lord Castlereagh) thought that by the course he had adopted towards his Imperial Majesty he had not only deprived him of that character of being the *exclusive* protector of Louis (a relation in which, for the general politics of Europe, it was of great importance that he should not be permitted to place himself), but that he had gradually brought him publicly to adopt the principles of the allied Powers as his own; and to push them as far as it was at all clear that they could be pushed without a dangerous reaction." Lord Castlereagh also quoted an opinion

which had just been expressed to him by the Duke of Wellington, that "he deemed the possession of a certain number of French fortresses for an extended period of time in itself preferable to the actual cession of the same places, for this obvious reason, that the one was compatible with French connexion, the other would tend to unite all Frenchmen against us, or rather against the Power that should be found in possession of these posts. . . . And when he stated that the temporary occupation was not incompatible with preserving an useful influence in France, he did it from knowing that the King and his ministers did not desire to see France without foreign troops, and that they admitted that the allies could not leave their troops in France without the security of a certain number of these fortresses." Lord Liverpool replied to the despatch from which these sentences are extracted in the first of the following letters ; to which the second, written after a conversation on the subject with Lord Stewart, may serve as a kind of supplement :

*Private and confidential.*

Fife House, 23d August, 1815.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

I have laid before the Prince Regent and the Cabinet your very able letter, marked "Private and Confidential," of the 17th inst. Under all the difficulties which unavoidably attend our present relations with the French Government, we are prepared to concur in the alternative stated in your letter to which both the Duke of Wellington and yourself give so decided a preference ; and, instead of urging the permanent cession of any part of the French territory by the French Government, we shall be satisfied with an arrangement which secures to the allies, for a time sufficiently extended, the military occupation of certain of the French fortresses, according to the projects in the Duke of Wellington's paper, and which provides at the same time for the rectification of the French frontier by restoring France to the situation in which she stood in the year 1790, and giving the fortresses *enclavés* in the neighbouring territories, to the states to which those territories belong.

We cannot conceal from ourselves and from you that an arrangement on this principle (which I believe to be entirely novel in its character) may be subject to many serious inconveniences; and we should be most desirous that there should be added to it therefore a stipulation for the dismantling of Lille and Strasburg. Such a stipulation need not in our judgment mortify the pride of the French nation; it would in no way affect the permanent interests of France, whilst it would add considerably to the temporary security of the allies; and we are of opinion that this object is the more deserving of attention as the other part of the arrangement might in a great measure fail in the event of differences unfortunately arising amongst the allies from any change in the policy of their respective Courts, by which any one of the considerable Powers might separate itself from the alliance during the period specified for the occupation of the fortresses, and might thereby throw the whole arrangement into confusion, or defeat the purpose of it altogether. In short, the principle of temporary occupation must necessarily be so complicated in its nature that we feel all the importance of annexing to it something which may afford security to the neighbouring states independent of the contingencies above stated, till such time as measures can be adopted for placing their own frontiers in a respectable state of defence.

You will understand me as not bringing this proposition for dismantling Lille or Strasburg forward as a *sine quâ non*, but as wishing it to be urged with all the weight which we feel is due to it; and, considering how very short our propositions fall of the Austrian and Prussian projects, I cannot but entertain the confident hope that when the French Government are aware, as they must be, of the extent of sacrifice which would have been demanded from them if it had not been for the moderation of Great Britain and Russia, they will not feel it possible to make any serious resistance to a concession of this nature.

We are fully sensible of the great importance of bringing our negotiations with France to a speedy issue; we understand that the Emperor of Austria has announced his intention of quitting Paris about the 10th of September, and that the Emperor of Russia will leave it about the same time. It is

very material that the arrangements with France should be concluded before their departure, as it is impossible to say what difficulties may not occur after the separation of the sovereigns. The public in France may consider it as an epoch, and may be disposed, as well as some members of their Government, to create embarrassments, and to take the chance of misunderstandings, on which they will not venture to calculate as long as so many of the sovereigns of Europe, or their immediate representatives, are united at Paris.

There are a great many points of detail relative to the temporary occupation of the fortresses to which it will be necessary particularly to direct your attention.

1st. How is the combined army which is to be left in France in the first instance to be paid? It must be clearly understood that the troops which are not British, or directly in British pay, must in no case look to be paid by us. If the British Government were once to make an advance for this purpose, it is obvious that the whole expense would very soon fall upon them.

2dly. In order to obviate inconveniences which may arise from any delay in the payment of the allied troops, it should be provided that the French Government should assign a certain sum quarterly or half-yearly for this purpose, and, if the same should not be supplied within a time to be specified, the officers commanding the corps of the allied troops should in that case, if not otherwise, be empowered, with the permission of the Commander-in-Chief, to raise the sum due to them upon a district of country to be agreed upon in the neighbourhood of the fortresses which they may be called upon to garrison.

I have stated these ideas upon the definitive arrangement, as those which have occurred to me at present. I may have other suggestions to make of the same nature; but I cannot too strongly impress upon you and the Duke of Wellington the importance of providing beforehand as distinctly as possible for the different contingencies which may arise, in order that there may be hereafter as few matters of dispute and contention as possible in the execution of so new a system.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.



*Private and confidential.*

Fife House, 28th August, 1815.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

Your brother Lord Stewart arrived in London yesterday morning, and came down to me soon after at Coombe Wood.

I had the opportunity there of a long conversation with him on all the points contained in your despatches, and we have had a Cabinet this morning at which he has attended, in order that such of our colleagues as were in town might be correctly apprised of your sentiments, and those of the Duke of Wellington, upon the present state of our negotiations.

I was inclined at first to hope that my letter of the 23d inst., which must have reached you after your brother left Paris, would have relieved you from all difficulties, inasmuch as it distinctly gives up all idea of permanent cession from France, except as far as such cession had been suggested by yourself; and, although we recommend the proposal being made for dismantling Lille and Strasburg, it is distinctly stated that this demand should not be brought forward as a *sine quâ non*; nor was it our intention that it should be urged in such a manner as might materially retard the conclusion of an arrangement between the different Powers.

The explanation, however, which we have since had with Lord Stewart, has convinced us that considerable embarrassment might arise from a proposition of this nature being even brought forward under the present circumstances, and in the existing state of the negotiations; that it is far better, in the situation in which we now stand, to advance no demand to which we are not determined to adhere; and that it is most expedient, therefore, to confine our proposition to the principle of temporary occupation and to that of the rectification of the frontier, according to the suggestion contained in your despatch, and approved by the Emperor of Russia in the memorandum delivered by Count Nesselrode.

We have been the more inclined to concur in this opinion from feeling the importance, and even the urgency, of bringing the negotiation to some issue before the period at which the Emperors will leave Paris, and before the new Assemblies shall have met.

These two events cannot fail to form a crisis in the relations of the allies with the French Government ; and it appears to be essential that, before it shall arise, the intention of the allied Powers with respect to France should be distinctly made known ; that they should have committed themselves to each other as to the points which they were determined to press ; and that they should, if possible, have succeeded in bringing the French Government to agree to the arrangement which shall have been proposed to them.

Lord Stewart has been so fully apprised of our sentiments on some of the details of the proposed arrangement that I feel it unnecessary to trouble you by detailing them in this letter. You will understand, however, that we attach great importance to the precise nature of the stipulation by which the fortresses which are to be temporarily occupied by the allies are at the period agreed upon to revert to France.

The terms of "the King or his legitimate successors" may be open to cavil, as it may be contended that any successor approved by the nation is a legitimate successor. It was to avoid this objection that the Chancellor suggested, in the memorandum of the 3d of August, the terms, "Louis XVIII. or his successors by rightful inheritance ;" and we wish you would attend to the adoption of this phrase or designation in the instrument which may be to be signed.

We are further of opinion that it cannot be too clearly expressed that the fortresses are not in any case to revert to France except it shall be under the government of Louis XVIII. or his successors by rightful inheritance. The explicit recognition of this principle, whilst it explains the motives which have actuated the councils of the allies, affords one of the best securities for the continuance of the King's authority. I am not aware that I can have anything further to add on this most important branch of your negotiations.

I trust that the explanations which I have given in this letter, and those which you will further receive from your brother, will enable you to bring the negotiations to a conclusion ; for whatever evils the French nation are at present suffering, they must be augmented in an infinite degree by their uncertainty as to their future fate. I am likewise firmly convinced that the

same uncertainty has a most unfavorable impression in this country and throughout Europe.

Whatever may be the first popular impression on the result of the negotiations according to the principles which have been agreed upon, your brother will be authorised to assure you that you will be most cordially and zealously supported and upheld by all your colleagues in this country.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

His sentiments on these points, on the general position of affairs, and on the especial duty of this country may be further seen in an extract from one of his letters to Canning. "The result of the victory at Waterloo must have surprised you nearly as much as the magnitude of the victory itself. For I know no instance in the history of the world, at least in modern times, of one battle producing such decisive effects. Our difficulties, however, are not over. Though Buonaparte is fortunately so circumstanced as to render it very little likely that he should ever be able to disturb the peace of the world again, it will be no easy matter to establish the authority of Louis XVIII. in France, and we are involved, with our allies, in this very embarrassing alternative: by demanding considerable sacrifices from France for the security of Europe, we unavoidably lower the character of the Government which it is our wish to uphold; on the other hand, the stability of that Government, after the allies shall have evacuated France, is so very problematical that we should not do our duty by Europe if we looked to no other security than that which the legitimate Government of the King of France could in itself hold out to us. You will have heard the appointment of Fouché much blamed, and will perhaps partake this sentiment yourself. I admit it was a desperate remedy, and even a humiliating one under the circumstances under which it was taken. But some of the most right-minded men in France were of opinion that it was absolutely necessary. It has certainly for the time paralysed the Jacobin party;

and as all idea of gaining the army, or any part of it, was entirely hopeless, this was an object of no small importance." No doubt there was an appearance of political expediency in disarming the party which still in their hearts longed for further disorder and fresh revolution, by arraying against it the man whom it regarded as its head. But perhaps no single transaction of the peace shows more conclusively the utter demoralization of every party in France than the circumstance that the employment of one whose whole career was stamped with such a deep brand of atrocity and infamy should have been received in any quarter with toleration; much more should have received the sanction of any who had a right to the appellation of "right-minded men" from a British minister.

We were very anxious to conclude the whole arrangement before the meeting of the new French Chambers, which were convoked for the 21st of September. Unluckily the Austrians and Prussians were interested in protracting the discussions. As Lord Castlereagh wrote to Lord Liverpool, "So long as they could feed, clothe, and pay their armies at the expense of France, and put English subsidies into their pockets besides, of which nothing could deprive them previous to April 1, 1816, but the actual conclusion of a treaty with France, it could not be supposed that they would be in a great hurry to come to a final settlement." And Prussia still persisted in her demand of Luxemburg, though she knew that, if it had been conceded, it would have re-opened the whole question by rendering it necessary to provide compensation and security for the King of the Netherlands in some other quarter. Lord Castlereagh, however, had no doubt but that in time, with the support of the Emperor of Russia, he should be able to bring the Prussian minister to reason; and was in reality more anxious about the domestic policy which he saw was likely to be forced upon Louis. On his return to Paris he had appointed Talleyrand his Prime Minister; and

had allowed him to take Fouché once more for a colleague, replacing him in his old post as Minister of Police. The policy of this appointment, as we have seen, had been approved even by men who detested Fouché's character as much as the Duke of Wellington and Lord Liverpool. But it bitterly offended the Royalist party, some of whom refused to serve with him, while the most distinguished of the whole body, the Vicomte de Châteaubriand, openly told Louis himself that it was the knell of the monarchy. Those who had advocated it had done so chiefly on the ground that it disarmed the Jacobins, whom the recent events and revolutions had revived as a band able at least to cause terror, if not to do actual mischief. But, whether it had that effect or not, there could be no doubt that it seemed like a pledge of the King's adhesion to the principles of the Revolution. Lord Castlereagh, to whom, as being on the spot, Lord Liverpool chiefly looked for information as to the state of affairs and parties in Paris, regarded this as, if an evil, at all events one that, in the King's position, could not be avoided. He saw more danger to the monarchy in the opposite views. In a letter written on the 14th of September, he delivers his opinion "That the King, by firmness keeping the Royalists back, and a direct policy, may create out of the men whom the Revolution has bred a party capable of governing; but that out of the Court party and the highflying Royalists he can extract nothing, at the present conjuncture, but confusion and weakness.

"There seems no doubt," he adds, "that an excellent spirit of loyalty will prevail in the new representatives. If this could be moderated instead of goaded by the Court, the ministers would be strong enough for every exertion, and they could hardly venture to fall short of their duty. Thus supported and watched, the Buonapartists and Jacobins would sink into insignificance. But I am afraid the game will be otherwise played. The

Court, that is, Monsieur and the Duchess d'Angoulême, will probably excite the Royalist members to run first at Fouché, as the most odious object ; and next at the Government generally. In both these efforts they will be assisted by the Jacobins, who wish nothing so much as to see the Royalists committed to the Government, which will soon concentrate all the weight of the Revolution against the Court, and thus render their chance of overturning the Bourbons infinitely greater ; or at least of setting aside this branch of the family. In fact, they appear to me to be creating an Orléans party, which with a little more management would soon die away, as the Duke has no great following from personal consideration ; he is only looked to as a resource against the known or supposed views of other branches of the family."

The accuracy of the writer's information was established by the events of the ensuing week. When Louis dismissed Fouché, Talleyrand instantly resigned ; and a new Ministry was appointed taken wholly from the Royalist party ; while it is still more remarkable how correct, at this early period, was his judgment of the causes which were likely to contribute, as they eventually did, to the success of the plots of the partisans of the Duc d'Orléans. Lord Liverpool coincided in his colleague's opinion of the impolicy of the change of Ministry at the moment, though he greatly doubted the good faith of some of the ministers, and especially of Fouché. Fouché had availed himself of his official post to draw up some reports of the state of France, which he not only laid before the King, but published and circulated through the kingdom, and in which he not only drew a most alarming picture of the miseries which were still, as he declared, desolating every part of the country, but ascribed them directly to the conduct of the allies, who "compromised the King's authority by reducing it to a state of impotence ; even rendering it odious, since its inability to prevent evil gave it the appearance of being an accomplice in it. Louis," he said,

“was their ally by the treaty of March, but they were making open war upon him.” He proceeded to complain that “the allied forces had not yet allowed any of their intentions to become known; no one knew either what idea he ought to form of the authority of his Majesty, or of the future of the nation. But France was not a country for blind obedience.” In subsequent paragraphs he spoke even more plainly of the oppression to which the allies had subjected the French people since their entrance into Paris; comparing it to Napoleon’s treatment of Prussia and other countries, and auguring a regeneration of the energy and public spirit of the people from a natural reaction against their cruelty, such as had been produced by the tyranny of Napoleon, and had destroyed him; and he ended by calling on Louis to withdraw from the alliance with those who were causing and preparing such evils, that there might be no screen between the resistance of his people and the foreign armies.<sup>1</sup> It was certainly not strange that Lord Liverpool should denounce the publication of reports couched in such language as “a flagrant indignity to the allies.” He declared that “it had done incalculable mischief.” And, as it was impossible to suppose that Fouché had taken such a step without the consent, at least, of Talleyrand, he contemplated a change in the French Administration as indispensable at no distant period. But he was equally anxious that “the King should make no change till after the meeting of the Assemblies, in which the different parties would show their relative strength;” and till he had in consequence obtained “a better knowledge of the disposition of the country towards each than he could at present possess.” If after a few weeks of their deliberations it should seem expedient to change

<sup>1</sup> The report from which these passages are extracted or abridged is given at length in the Castlereagh Despatches (x. 468). Extracts from another, almost equally inflammatory, are given by Alison (Second Series, chap. iii. § 39, note).

his ministers, "even those who might be sacrificed would have no reason to complain of the King; they would be forced to allow that he had acted upon the principles on which he set out, of choosing a constitutional Administration, and of conforming his government, as far as was proper, to the will and sentiment of the country." Above all other considerations Lord Liverpool felt it most desirable that the impending treaty should be concluded before any change took place. The reduction of territory, slight as it might be, and the restoration of the pictures and statues to their original possessors, could not fail to make it unpopular with the French people in general; and, as the odium of it would inevitably fall upon the statesmen in office, he was anxious to save the high Royalists from incurring it.

He expressed the same feeling still more forcibly after the change had taken place. "The want of judgment of the King in changing his Administration at this particular moment is most truly to be lamented. I could not resist saying to the Prince Regent yesterday, that, if his father had been in a situation to be obliged to make a humiliating peace, and at the same time was anxious to get rid of his ministers, he would have taken care to make the ministers, whom he was anxious to turn out, the instruments of the peace, and not have thrown the inevitable unpopularity and odium of such a transaction on those who were to succeed them;" while a letter to another correspondent shows that he deplored the act not so much for its own sake, as because the source from which, in his judgment, it sprang was calculated to lead not only to other mistakes, but to a generally erroneous policy. "It is most extraordinary," he writes to Mr. Cooke, "that the French princes, after living so many years in this country, should remain as ignorant of all the principles and practice of a popular or mixed Government as if they had known no atmosphere but that of Versailles under its former sovereigns."



To Lord Castlereagh too the impolicy of the step and the utter inability of the King to maintain himself in the line which he had taken seemed so unquestionable that he reported the general opinion to be that, "if the allied troops were to withdraw, Louis would not remain on his throne a week." But at the same time he spoke in high terms of the general good sense, and especially of the conciliatory temper and skilful address, of the new Prime Minister, the Duke de Richelieu; and these qualities of his, aided perhaps by the dread of a new convulsion, which, in the minds of many, must have prevailed over every other consideration, proved so effective that the new Administration lasted for nearly five years, and at last fell more because it came short of the exaggerated opinions of the ultra-Royalists than from any open hostility of its more natural opponents.

By the end of September Lord Castlereagh had so far succeeded in convincing the Austrian and Prussian diplomatists of the necessity of withdrawing a portion of their demands that every point of real difficulty seemed to be settled, and the allied sovereigns, to his great delight, had fixed the day of their departure from Paris; when, almost at the last moment of their presence in Paris, the passion of the Czar for stage effect involved our minister in an embarrassment which would not have appeared as comical to him as at first sight it did appear, had he foreseen how spitefully, and not more sillily than perseveringly, he would have been represented as the favorer and champion of a system which from the first he ridiculed, and in many respects counteracted. In the manner in which he mingled gallantry and intrigue with professions of devotion, and united both with a despotic arrogance which expected that the mere declaration of his will or opinion was entitled to universal deference and compliance, Alexander bore some resemblance to Louis XIV.; and he had at this moment formed a connection, which however he desired to be considered purely Platonic, with a Madame

Krudener, who had adopted the not altogether novel idea of compensating for the notorious irregularities of her early life by the highest degree of speculative philanthropy and virtue. The mode in which her project was to be carried out will be best seen in the following letter, in which Lord Castlereagh related the whole transaction, as it was first brought before him, to Lord Liverpool:

MY DEAR LORD,

Paris, 28th September, 1815.

You will receive enclosed a "lettre autographe"<sup>1</sup> from the three allied sovereigns addressed to the Prince Regent, which I have

<sup>1</sup> The treaty, which is to be found in the Parliamentary Debates of the year 1816 (xxxii. 135), was drawn in these terms:

"Au nom de la Très-Sainte et Indivisible Trinité.

"Leurs Majestés l'Empereur d'Autriche, le Roi de Prusse, et l'Empereur de Russie, par suite des grands événemens qui ont signalé en Europe le cours des trois dernières années, et principalement des bienfaits multipliés qu'il a plu à la Divine Providence de répandre sur les États dont les gouvernements ont placé leur confiance et leur espoir en elle seule, ayant acquis la conviction intime qu'il est nécessaire d'asseoir la marche à adopter par les puissances dans leurs rapports mutuels sur les vérités sublimes que nous enseigne l'éternelle religion du Dieu Sauveur:

"Déclarant solennellement que le présent acte n'a pour objet que de manifester à la face de l'univers leur détermination inébranlable de ne prendre pour règle de leur conduite, soit dans l'administration de leurs États respectifs, soit dans leurs relations politiques avec tout autre gouvernement, que les préceptes de justice, de charité et de paix, qui, loin d'être uniquement applicables à la vie privée, doivent au contraire influencer directement sur les résolutions des Princes, et guider toutes leurs démarches, comme étant le seul moyen de consolider les institutions humaines et de remédier à leurs imperfections.

"En conséquence leurs Majestés sont convenus des articles suivants:

"ART. I. Conformément aux paroles des Saintes Écritures, qui ordonnent à tous les hommes de se regarder comme frères, les trois monarques contractants demeureront unis par les liens d'une fraternité véritable et indissoluble; et se considérant comme compatriotes, ils se prêteront en toute occasion et en tout lieu assistance, aide, et secours: se regardant envers leurs sujets et armées comme pères de famille, ils les dirigeront dans le même esprit de fraternité dont ils sont animés, pour protéger la religion, la paix, et la justice.

"ART. II. En conséquence le seul principe en vigueur, soit entre les dits Gouvernements, soit entre les sujets, sera celui de se rendre

been desired to transmit. It was delivered to me by Prince Metternich, the communication being understood to be made

réciiproquement service, de se témoigner par une bienveillance inaltérable l'affection mutuelle dont ils doivent être animés, de ne se considérer tous que comme membres d'une même nation Chrétienne. Les trois Princes Alliés, ne s'envisageant eux-mêmes que comme délégués par la Providence pour gouverner trois branches d'une même famille, savoir, l'Autriche, la Prusse, et la Russie ; confessant ainsi que la nation Chrétienne dont eux et leurs peuples font partie n'a réellement d'autre souverain que celui à qui seul appartient en propriété la puissance, parce qu'en lui seul se trouvent tous les trésors de l'amour, de la science, et de la sagesse infinie, c'est-à-dire Dieu notre Divin Sauveur Jésus-Christ, le Verbe du Très-Haut, la parole de vie ; leurs Majestés recommandent en conséquence avec la plus tendre sollicitude à leurs peuples, comme unique moyen de jouir de cette paix, qui naît de la bonne conscience, et qui seule est durable, de se fortifier chaque jour davantage dans les principes et l'exercice des devoirs que le Divin Sauveur a enseignés aux hommes.

"ART. III. Toutes les puissances qui voudront solennellement avouer les principes sacrés qui ont dicté le présent acte, et qui reconnoîtront combien il est important au bonheur des nations trop longtems agitées, que ces vérités exercent désormais sur les destinées humaines toute l'influence qui leur appartient, seront reçues avec autant d'empressement que d'affection dans cette sainte alliance.

" Fait triple, et signé à Paris, l'an de grâce 1815, 14 (26) septembre.

" FRANÇOIS.

" FRÉDÉRIC GUILLAUME.

" ALEXANDRE."

And the Prince Regent's accession to it was invited in the following note :

" Paris, le 14 (26) Septembre, 1815.

" MONSIEUR NOTRE FRÈRE ET COUSIN,

" Les événemens qui ont affligé le monde depuis plus de vingt ans nous ont convaincus que le seul moyen d'y mettre un terme se trouvoit dans l'union la plus franche et la plus intime entre les Souverains que la Divine Providence a placés à la tête des peuples de l'Europe. L'histoire des trois années mémorables qui viennent de s'écouler atteste les effets bienfaisans que cette union a produits pour le salut de l'humanité. Mais afin d'assurer à ce lien la solidité que réclame impérieusement la grandeur et la pureté du but vers lequel il tend, nous avons pensé qu'il dût être fondé sur les principes sacrés de la religion Chrétienne. Profondément pénétré de cette importante vérité, nous avons conclu et signé l'acte que nous soumettons aujourd'hui à la méditation de Votre Altesse Royale. Elle se persuadera qu'il a

to his Royal Highness through the medium of the Emperor of Austria as the senior Emperor.

To explain the nature of this rather novel proceeding, I have obtained copies both of the letter and its enclosure, deeming it material to accompany it with such explanations as may assist his Royal Highness in making to it a suitable reply. I have, then, to acquaint you that, although the Emperor of Austria is the ostensible organ, the measure has entirely originated with the Emperor of Russia, whose mind has lately taken a deeply religious tinge. Since he came to Paris, he has passed a part of every evening with a Madame de Krudener, an old fanatic, who has a considerable reputation amongst the few highflyers in religion that are to be found at Paris. The first intimation I had of this extraordinary act was from the Emperor himself; and I was rather surprised to find it traced back to a conversation with which I was honored by the Emperor when leaving Vienna. You may remember my sending home a *projet* of declaration with which I proposed the Congress should close, in which the sovereigns were solemnly to pledge themselves in the face of the world to preserve to their people the peace they had conquered, and to treat as a common enemy whatever Power should violate it. The Emperor told me that this idea, with which he seemed much pleased at the

pour objet de raffermir les rapports qui nous unissent, en formant de tous les peuples de la Chrétienté une seule et même famille, et en leur assurant par là, sous la protection du Tout-Puissant, le bonheur, le salut, les bienfaits de la paix, et des liens de fraternité à jamais indissolubles. Nous avons vivement regretté que Votre Altesse Royale n'ait point été réuni avec nous dans le grand moment où nous avons conclu cette transaction.

"Nous l'invitons, comme notre premier et plus intime allié, à y accéder et à compléter une œuvre uniquement consacrée au bien de l'humanité, et que nous devons dès lors considérer comme la plus belle récompense de nos efforts.

"Nous réitérons à Votre Altesse Royale les assurances du sincère attachement, et de la haute estime avec lesquels nous sommes

"De Votre Altesse Royale,

"Les bons Frères, Cousins, et Alliés,

"FRANÇOIS.

"FRÉDÉRIC GUILLAUME.

"ALEXANDRE."

time, had never passed from his mind, but that he thought it ought to assume a more formal shape, and one directly personal to the sovereigns ; that he had communicated that morning to the Emperor of Austria his sentiments upon this subject, and that he would speak to me further upon it in a few days.

Prince Metternich, the following day, came to me with the *projet* of the treaty since signed. He communicated to me in great confidence the difficulty in which the Emperor of Austria felt himself placed ; that he felt great repugnance to be a party to such an act, and yet was more apprehensive of refusing himself to the Emperor's application ; that it was quite clear his mind was affected ; that peace and good-will was at present the idea which engrossed his thoughts ; that he had found him of late friendly and reasonable on all points ; and that he was unwilling to thwart him in a conception which, however wild, might save him and the rest of the world much trouble so long as it should last. In short, seeing no retreat, after making some verbal alterations, the Emperor of Austria agreed to sign it. The Emperor of Russia then carried it to the King of Prussia, who felt in the same manner, but came to the same conclusion.

As soon as the instrument was executed between the sovereigns, without the intervention of their ministers, the Emperor of Russia brought it to me, developed his whole plan of universal peace, and told me the three sovereigns had agreed to address a letter to the Prince Regent, to invite him to accede, of which intended letter his Imperial Majesty delivered to me the enclosed copy. The Duke of Wellington happened to be with me when the Emperor called, and it was not without difficulty that we went through the interview with becoming gravity.

Foreseeing the awkwardness of this piece of sublime mysticism and nonsense, especially to a British sovereign, I examined with Prince Metternich every practicable expedient to stop it ; but the Emperor of Austria, with all his sobriety of mind, did not venture to risk it. When it reached me, in fact, the deed was done, and no other course remained than to do homage to the sentiment on which it was founded, and to the advantages Europe might hope to derive from three such powerful sovereigns directing all their influence to the preservation of peace ;

saying that I was confident the Prince Regent would unite *cœur et d'âme* with his august allies, in making this the basis of all his policy ; and that I would lose no time in laying before his Royal Highness this solemn pledge of the pacific and moderate spirit which actuated their councils.

I ventured to express to the Emperor my satisfaction that the sovereigns had not given to this instrument an official character ; that this might have rendered its production as a State document necessary ; that it was better it should pass as an autographic communication of sentiment between sovereign and sovereign, binding upon their own consciences in the general management of their affairs, than that it should be exposed to public discussion as an act advised by their ministers. I had, in truth, taken pains, through Prince Metternich, to keep it, if it must go forward, in this channel : even if I should receive the Prince's command to countersign it, it might find some difficulty in passing through the ordinary course of office.

Upon the whole this is what may be called a scrape ; and yet, in the long run, it may be attended with more beneficial results than many of the acts which are in progress, and which are of a character better suited to meet the eye of Parliament. The fact is that the Emperor's mind is not completely sound. Last year there was but too much reason to fear that its impulse would be to conquest and dominion. The general belief now is that he is disposed to found his own glory upon a principle of *peace* and *benevolence*. Since the point of Poland was disposed of, there has been nothing in his political conduct, in the progress of arrangements, which indicates another purpose, and he really appears to be in earnest. It is, at all events, wise to profit by this disposition as far as it will carry us ; and this is peculiarly the feeling of Austria and Prussia, who hope to keep down, "now that they are compatriots," much of the spirit of frontier jealousy which has hitherto embarrassed them.

With the letter and treaty you will also receive a *projet* for the Prince's accession, which the Emperor sent me this morning before his departure. I am desired by the Emperor of Austria, through Metternich, to express his earnest hope that the Prince will not refuse himself to this overture, however much he may feel, with him, the embarrassment of the proceeding ; that he

thinks good may come of indulging the Emperor, and that real danger might result to the alliance by a refusal. My own opinion very much concurs with that of his Imperial Majesty, and, in weighing difficulties on both sides, I think no person will blame the Prince for not refusing himself to *a proposition so made to him*, where the objection lies rather against the excessive excellence than the quality and nature of the engagement; but then, I think, the Prince must take it upon himself, and sign it without the intervention of his ministers, as an autographic avowal of sentiment between him and the sovereigns his allies, tending to preserve the tranquillity of Europe. To decline doing so, after a late explanation, might produce very unpleasant consequences.

The Emperor told me, with great delight, that there was nothing had given him so much satisfaction as to affix his signature to this bond of peace in, he believed, the most *irreligious* capital in Europe.

I confide this communication to your management, and hope the Prince Regent may find himself enabled to avoid disturbing the harmony which at present subsists between him and his allies.

I am, my dear Lord, yours very sincerely,

To LORD LIVERPOOL.

CASTLEREAGH.

The treaty here spoken of, known as that of the Holy Alliance, was fiercely denounced at the time by some of the Whig leaders in the House of Commons, and still more bitterly by their more violent supporters out of doors; more, however, because of its assertion of an indissoluble union between the three potentates who were the only absolute sovereigns in Christendom than from any objectionable course of action to which it bound them, or from the terms in which it was expressed. The language indeed was rather that of a sermon, or at least of a text, than that of a treaty; and of the substance no harsher condemnation need be pronounced than that subsequently expressed by Lord Castlereagh in Parliament, that it was perhaps not necessary. But an engagement which is unnecessary is necessarily unstatesmanlike; and the derision with which

he privately looked on the whole transaction could hardly fail to be shared by Lord Liverpool, who acknowledged the receipt of the treaty with as little delay as possible ; his letter, in one point of view, showing even greater disapproval of it than had been displayed by Lord Castlereagh, since he absolutely rejected the idea which the Foreign Secretary had broached of allowing the Regent to sign it " without the intervention of his ministers," an act which, as he pointed out, would have been wholly incompatible with the theory of the Constitution and of ministerial responsibility.

Walmer Castle, 3d October, 1815.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

I have received your letter with the enclosures, containing an autograph letter from the Emperors of Austria and Russia and the King of Prussia to the Prince Regent, the copy of a treaty signed by their Majesties at Paris on the 26th of September, and the *projet* of an act of accession by the Prince Regent.

I have laid the same before the Prince Regent, and we have had a Cabinet to consider what is fit to be done in consequence.

I forbear discussing the question how far it might not have been more advisable, on every account, to prevent such a proceeding altogether. The work is done ; and it is one thing to have wished it not to have been done, at least in such a manner, and another to refuse being a party to it after it is done.

It is quite impossible, however, to advise the Prince to sign the act of accession which has been transmitted to him. Such a step would be inconsistent with all the forms and principles of our Government, and would subject those who advised it to a very serious responsibility.

A treaty is an act of State ; and this treaty (if it is of any use) is obviously meant to be so. Now nothing is more clear than that the king or regent of Great Britain can be a party to no act of State personally ; he can only be a party to it through the instrumentality of others, who are responsible for it.

The sovereign, therefore, never signs any treaty in the first instance. He negotiates, concludes, and signs by plenipo-



tentiaries, whom he empowers to do those acts. He afterwards ratifies whatever they have done, if he approves of it ; but this ratification must have the Great Seal affixed to it.

If the sovereign cannot sign a treaty personally, neither can he accede to it personally. He must therefore authorise you, or some plenipotentiary, to accede to it in his name, and on his part. But, independent of all other objections to such a course, it would be an incongruity for the sovereign or regent of Great Britain to accede to a treaty through a plenipotentiary which the other sovereigns had thought proper to sign personally. We are bound to suppose that such a personal act is not inconsistent with the forms and principles of their Governments, though it is repugnant to those of ours.

After much consideration, we have been of opinion that the best course for the Prince to adopt is to write an autographical letter to the three sovereigns according to the enclosed draft. It will obviate all the objections above stated, and will make (it is to be hoped) the Prince Regent as much a party to the proceeding as the Emperor of Russia and his two allies could desire. At all events, it obviates all the objections which would arise to the Prince refusing to be a party in any way to the act in question. The Prince, by this letter, gives his full sanction to all the principles which the other sovereigns are desirous of consecrating ; and, if it is thought fit to publish the treaty, I see no objection to the Prince's letter being published with it.

The enclosed draft was to be laid before the Prince this morning, and I hope to be able to send to you the three letters by the mail of Friday. In transmitting them you can explain fully the reason why it has been necessary for the Prince to adopt this course instead of signing the proposed act of accession. I trust they will prove satisfactory, and relieve you from all further difficulty in this business.

Believe me to be, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

ENCLOSURE.

*Draft of answer from the Prince Regent enclosed in the foregoing.*

I have had the honour of receiving your Imperial Majesty's letter, together with the copy of the treaty signed by your Majesty and your august allies at Paris on the 26th of September.

As the forms of the British constitution, which I am called upon to administer in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty my father, preclude me from acceding formally to this treaty in the shape in which it has been presented to me, I adopt this course of conveying to the august sovereigns who have signed it my entire concurrence in the principles which they have laid down, and in the declaration which they have set forth of making the Divine precepts of the Christian religion the invariable rule of their conduct in all their relations, social and political, and of cementing the union which ought ever to subsist between all Christian nations; and it will always be my earnest endeavour to regulate my conduct in the station which Divine Providence has vouchsafed to place me by these sacred maxims, and to co-operate with my august allies in all measures which may be likely to contribute to the peace and happiness of mankind.

No doubt Lord Liverpool was not sorry that the forms of our constitution prevented the requested adhesion to this "sublime piece of mysticism and nonsense" from being given by the Regent, who otherwise might have felt it as difficult as the Emperor of Austria to refuse his signature without personally offending the Czar, while the act of making himself a party to it would have placed the ministers, on whom it would have fallen to justify it to Parliament, in the most awkward of all positions, making them the advocates of conduct which was at best ridiculous. It certainly gave some colour to the notion which Lord Castlereagh intimates, that Alexander along with his father's empire had inherited some portion of his unsoundness of mind. And this supposition may perhaps excuse in some degree the overbearing arrogance of his conduct in the negotiations at Vienna. But if, as seems probable, neither Lord Castlereagh nor Lord Liverpool at the time expected the treaty ever likely to lead to any active results, they must have congratulated themselves on being thus enabled without offence to avoid all implication in it still more sincerely a few years afterwards, when they were

compelled to make public their objections to the measures which the three contracting sovereigns employed against the Neapolitan revolutionists, and which may be called the firstfruits and consummation of the treaty, but against which the British ambassadors at the different Courts of Europe were instructed to protest as what could not "be reconciled either with the general interests or with the real authority and dignity of independent sovereigns."

The departure of the sovereigns from Paris apparently facilitated the conclusion of the treaty with France, the different clauses of which were finally arranged within the next few weeks. The arguments which appear to have had the greatest weight in at last inducing the French ministers to acquiesce in the cessions which they were compelled to make on their north-eastern frontier came from Lord Liverpool himself, who, as he writes to the Duke of Wellington, "had suggested to Castlereagh, what did not seem to have occurred to him, that if the French Government stood upon the principles of the integrity of Old France, they were bound to restore Avignon, the Comtat Venaissin, and Montbelliard. If these territories" (he argued) "were allowed to remain under *their* sovereignty as *enclaves*, which he believed to be for the general interest, it was not unreasonable, even on their own principles, that they should give up as equivalents the *enclaves* in Germany and the Low Countries." The Venaissin had been the very first acquisition of the Revolution; as such it was an object of pride to a large party in France far beyond any of the more recently acquired fortresses which on merely military grounds might have appeared of greater value; and the fear thus suggested of being required to cede it had a great influence on the tone of the French diplomatists.

The arrest and trial of Marshal Ney happened almost at the same time with the final conclusion of the treaty. Lord Liverpool himself was not free from solicitations on the subject, though it was one with which it was hardly possible to affirm that he had even the most remote con-

nexion ; he was, however, appealed to for his interposition with the French Government by Madame Ney herself, who naturally caught at every conceivable expedient to save her husband, and by Lord Holland, whom the same unfortunate lady had implored to procure the interference of the Prince Regent, and who, though in almost invariable opposition to the Government, addressed him as a private friend to consult him on the best mode of approaching and influencing the Prince. The letter is in its general tone so honorable to Lord Holland, and at the same time so characteristic of the general spirit of English politicians, so illustrative of the compatibility of the utmost vehemence of party disagreement with the candid appreciation of each other's talents and virtues, while at the same time it so supplies a proof above suspicion of the reputation for kindness and honesty which Lord Liverpool enjoyed even among his most uncompromising antagonists, that it seems desirable to give it at full length.

Woburn Abbey, November 23d, 1815.

MY DEAR LIVERPOOL,

Our friendship on my side, and I believe on yours also, has survived so many years of political opposition, that I feel no scruple in writing to you privately and openly upon the subject of the more ostensible letter I send you. In such a case as this, where there is no time to correct any error of judgment in the choice of a channel which the parties have somewhat unaccountably fixed upon to carry their petition to the Government, I must of course do all in my power to secure the prayer being delivered into the Prince's hand, and the grounds of it brought before his attention. I wish, however, for the sake of the poor man and of the object, to keep this application as clear as possible from my particular principles or views of such matters, which I am but too well aware are likely to prejudice rather than advance any suit like the present. If there is any mode you can suggest which is regular, and at the same time certain, of bringing the matter *really and bonâ fide* before the Prince Regent's personal notice, without carrying with it the

disadvantage of my known opinions on subjects of this nature, I should be most ready to adopt it as that most likely to have weight, provided it is such as can enable me, not only to say to Madame Ney, but to satisfy myself, that I have done all in my power to comply with her request of drawing the personal attention of the Prince to this most interesting and heart-breaking subject. If there is no other mode but an audience (the inconvenience of which to myself I do not regard a straw, but the disadvantage of which to the success of the petition I feel very strongly), to that I must resort ; and in that case I take the liberty of requesting you to make the application to that purpose for me through the most regular channel, and to apprise me, by the return of my servant, who is at your or the proper officer's commands, when and where the Prince will receive me.

I do not disguise from you that, with perfect consistency with my own opinions, I could as a peer, and without any suggestion from the parties concerned, solicit an audience on this subject. The honour of the country is, I think, implicated ; and an apprehension of any stain upon that honour is quite enough to justify me in soliciting such audience if I thought it in any way useful. If Louis XVIII. *was* a party to the capitulation, we should *insist* on its being observed ; if he was *not*, delicacy, if not the strict letter of the agreement, should lead us to insist on the suspension of all proceedings of this kind till France and Paris were virtually and really, and not nominally and by courtesy of expression only, under the sway of a French Government.

I beg your pardon, however, for deviating into argument ; the impossibility of speaking on a subject on which I feel so strongly without doing so is what makes me so unwilling to put myself forward in a case where supplication, or dry argument on the instrument, without feeling or passion, are alone likely to prevail. Madame Ney, as you will see, rests her claim on the capitulation, in the construction of which she of course expects that the most favorable interpretation to the yielding party will be adopted. Allow me to observe one circumstance : the Duke of Wellington says, and says truly, that the pictures not being included in the capitulation, the

allies have a right to take them ; but, if the allies are not the supreme power in Paris, have they a right to take anything? and if they are the supreme power in Paris, how can we hope that history will consider any act of Louis XVIII. other than the act of those who took possession of Paris on the faith of not molesting or pursuing those who were then in that capital, on the ground of the situations they then held, or before had held, or that of their conduct, or of their political opinions?

Whatever division, my dear Liverpool, radical difference of opinion on many political questions, and some political principles, may have occasioned between you and me, I have always found you a good-natured, and I have always believed you to be a just and honorable man. We all profess one opinion in common, a desire to maintain the character and honour of our country high, not only in the generation in which we live, but with posterity ; and, whatever triumph I might feel in some species of faults in a political adversary, I can assure you from the bottom of my heart that anything which tarnished the moral character of a Ministry of which your name is at the head would give me sincere and real concern, not only from those public motives common to us all as Englishmen, but from private regard which I have always felt for you. If you have not the same sentiments for me, you will think this not only foolish, but impertinent ; but if it be the difference of our political views which makes me see this subject in the light I do, I can at least assure you it is private affection that makes me express it in this manner.

Ever yours,

VASSALL HOLLAND.

To Madame Ney Lord Liverpool could only reply by referring her to the answer which she had already received to a similar communication from the Duke of Wellington. But he could not refuse himself the pleasure of responding to the frank appeal which Lord Holland had made to his kindly feelings by an assurance of the gratification which it had given him. " The differences which had unfortunately arisen between them on political subjects had never, as his best friends well knew, impaired the feelings of

attachment which he entertained towards Lord Holland at an early period of both their lives, and he had never doubted that Lord Holland was actuated by similar feelings towards him." But, at the same time, he avowed that on the subject under discussion "his opinion differed widely" from that expressed by Lord Holland. Indeed, we have seen, in more than one of his letters, that he looked upon it as indispensable to the strength, and even to the security, of Louis's Government, that he should show that he could dare to make a severe example of some of those who had gone over to Napoleon on his return from Elba. In a letter to Canning, from which one extract has been already given, he expresses a decided opinion that "one never can feel that the King is secure upon his throne till he has dared to spill traitors' blood." Not that he was not himself as far as possible from being over-prone to severity: for he added, "it was not that many examples would be necessary; but the daring to make a few would alone manifest any strength in the Government." And at the same time he points out a difficulty which to many would not have seemed very consistent with either the French character in general, or their recent history. "It is a curious circumstance, after the sanguinary scenes which we recollect at the beginning of the French Revolution, that all parties appear to have an inseparable repugnance to executions." Not that this feeling proceeded from any of the motives which could make it honorable or amiable, nor even that it arose from repentance and shame at the recollection of the atrocities of 1793. It had the most ignoble of all sources: "it arises not from mercy, but from fear. Every Government that has been recently established in France has felt its own situation so weak and uncertain that the persons composing it have not ventured to make examples of their enemies from fear of retaliation." And the very circumstances under which the existing Ministry had been placed in office might have been expected to render them more susceptible of such a fear than their

predecessors. But they felt, with Lord Liverpool, that their own security would be best ensured by seeming to believe in their own strength; that, in this point of view, one or two examples were necessary: and there could be no doubt whatever that, among the offenders whose guilt called for condign punishment, Ney stood pre-eminent by the audacity and the importance of his treachery; so pre-eminent that, unless he were protected by some circumstance independent of the merits of his case, no one could be punished if he were pardoned. Whether, therefore, his life should be taken or should be spared turned wholly on the question whether he was included in the capitulation of Paris. And if this point be decided, not so much by the words of the instrument as by the interpretation put upon it from the first, not only by the Duke of Wellington, but by the French themselves: by Fouché, who at the time of the capitulation was at the head of the Provisional Government; by Carnot, one of the chief members of that Government; and even by Ney himself: it must be admitted that he was not entitled to shelter himself under that plea. For Carnot described it as "a purely military convention, leaving all political questions untouched;" Fouché recommended Ney to flee, and gave him a passport, under a feigned name, to ensure his escape; and Ney gladly availed himself of the assistance, and had almost reached the frontier in safety, when some irresistible longing for his home made him return to his house against his better judgment, and so rush upon his fate. And these reasons Lord Liverpool fully explained to the Prince Regent in the following letter, in which he acquainted him with Lord Holland's desire to seek an audience of his Royal Highness:

Fife House, 24th November, 1815.

Lord Liverpool has the honour to send your Royal Highness a letter which he has received from Lord Holland, together with the copy of the answer which Lord Liverpool has returned to it. Lord Liverpool at the same time transmits for your Royal High-



ness's information the letter which he received some days ago from Madame Ney,<sup>1</sup> and the answer which Lord Liverpool, after consulting your Royal Highness's confidential servants, returned to Madame Ney.

Your Royal Highness's confidential servants were decidedly of opinion that there was no ground whatever for the plea advanced by Madame Ney on the part of her husband : that the convention for the capitulation of Paris could only bind the military

<sup>1</sup> Madame Ney's letter and Lord Liverpool's reply were couched in the following terms :

" MY LORD,

" I have the honour of laying before your Excellency a copy of the memorial which Marshal Ney, my husband, has addressed to the Duke of Wellington, general-in-chief of the English army, with a view of claiming the performance, as far as he is concerned, of the twelfth article of the capitulation of Paris, which protects the army and the inhabitants of this capital from being in any manner made responsible for their former conduct.

" Marshal Ney, relying upon that treaty, remained in France, and can neither be tried nor detained without being the victim of his confidence in a promise given in the face of Europe, and in the name of the English Government.

" I flatter myself, my Lord, that you will be pleased to give, as soon as possible, to the Duke of Wellington, and to the English Ambassador at Paris, such instructions as conform with the idea which in France is entertained of British magnanimity ; and I look forward with confidence to what, on this occasion, your understanding and your equity will suggest to you.

" LA MARÉCHALE NEY,

" *Princess of the Moskowa.*"

" London, 21st November, 1815.

" MADAM,

" I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th inst., and it is with sentiments of sincere commiseration for the unfortunate situation in which you are placed, that I feel myself called upon to acquaint you, that I can return no other answer to the representations contained in your letter than by referring you to the communications which have been already made by the Duke of Wellington and Sir Charles Stuart on the part of the allied Powers to Marshal Ney and to yourself.

" I have, &c.

" LIVERPOOL."

commanders ; that they acted in the full spirit of it by arresting and molesting no one ; that Marshal Ney left Paris, and afterwards assumed a feigned name, and was taken in disguise, which clearly proved that he considered himself exposed to the prosecution of the King's Government as soon as that Government was restored, and in fact the plea of the convention was never brought forward till every other resource appeared to fail him, though if it was well founded it might equally have been made an objection to his arrest.

Your Royal Highness's confidential servants were further of opinion that it was of the utmost importance, even on the ground of humanity, that there should not appear to be any demur or delay on the part of your Government which might have the effect of holding out hopes which could not afterwards be realized.

Lord Liverpool humbly submits to your Royal Highness that if Lord Holland should transmit Madame Ney's representation in a letter to your Royal Highness, it will only be necessary for your Royal Highness to direct Colonel M'Mahon to acknowledge in your Royal Highness's name the receipt of it. If Lord Holland should have an audience of your Royal Highness, your Royal Highness will of course hear what Lord Holland has to say, but your Royal Highness cannot be expected to return any answer.

Lord Liverpool has communicated to Lord Holland privately his opinion on the subject.

No one could blame, no one in fact did blame, Lord Liverpool for declining to exert himself for such a prisoner ; but many, even in England, blamed the Duke of Wellington for not pronouncing him included in the capitulation, and as such exempt from prosecution ; and in France the feeling was naturally still more prevalent, and greatly increased Lord Liverpool's anxiety. The Duke had been unanimously appointed by the allied sovereigns to the command of the Army of Occupation ; but many arrangements were necessary before he could quit Paris for the frontier ; and, as early as the middle of October, Lord Liverpool wrote to Lord Castlereagh to beg that he would urge on him the

duty of being careful of his own safety. "We ought," he said, "never to lose sight for a moment of the consideration that, with whatever humanity and indulgence the French might have been treated by us, they hated us far more than any other nation, and that they would most willingly embark in any project for the destruction of the force which had saved them, if they only thought that it was likely to prove successful."

The Duke himself, however, had less apprehension : he had thought the new Government stronger than it was generally believed to be ; or, what came to the same thing, the parties opposed to it weaker. In the middle of November he wrote to Lord Liverpool : "I know that you learn the state of affairs here from other quarters, and therefore I don't trouble you. My own opinion is that the King and his Government are in a better situation now than they were this time last year ; because there is no head against them ; because there is no confidence in anybody, nor is there anybody who has talent to become a head ; because the real danger, the disaffection of the army, is felt and acknowledged ; and because measures are taking to form a loyal army if possible. There is plenty of discontent, and talk, and reports, and opinions, but nothing that shows anything like a serious conspiracy, and my own opinion is that the King will hold his ground if the courtiers and his family don't force him to take some step which will give serious alarm to the holders of national property."

At last, on the 20th of November, the treaty between France and the allies was signed. We need not enumerate its details. Its general purport may be sufficiently described by saying that it provided for the reduction of France to the same boundaries which limited her territories before the Revolution, with the addition of the little province of Venaissin, which she was allowed to keep, and for which she surrendered Landau, Sarre Louis, and one or two other fortresses of small extent and importance ; imposing on her at the same time the payment of twenty-eight millions

of money to the allies for the expenses of the war of 1815; and of a still larger sum to the Powers beyond the Rhine in restitution of the enormous sums which Napoleon had formerly exacted from them; and, finally, stipulating for the occupation of the strong line of fortresses which runs along the frontier of the Netherlands, by an allied army of 150,000 men for five years (which, however, under certain contingencies, might be reduced to three), which, during the period of occupation, was to be paid and maintained by France. One clause was added at the direct suggestion and urgency of Lord Liverpool himself. Early in October he wrote to Lord Castlereagh, pointing out how far more important than any convention with a single nation for the suppression of the Slave-trade would be the insertion of a provision condemning it "in a treaty to which all the Powers in Europe would be parties." And, in accordance with his desire, an "additional article" was appended to the treaty, binding France, without loss of time, to concert with the British Government "the most effectual measures for the entire and definitive abolition of a commerce so odious and so strongly condemned by the laws of religion and nature" as the Slave-trade. And the first political letter written by Lord Liverpool, after the treaty was signed, affords another evidence of his constant readiness to exert himself in the cause of humanity, though on this occasion he was undertaking a still more difficult task, the inculcation on a Roman Catholic potentate of the duty of universal religious toleration as the one just principle of all government.

This letter, which was addressed to our Ambassador at Paris, sufficiently explains its object:

*Private.*

Fife House, 29th November, 1815.

MY DEAR SIR,

The subject of the present letter is considered by myself and my colleagues of so much importance, that we have thought it

better not to postpone writing to you till Lord Castlereagh's return, which we might otherwise have desired.

The reports, which have reached this country of the persecution of the Protestants in the south of France, have for some time made a very unfavorable impression ; but within these few days meetings have been called in the metropolis, and in some parts of the country, for the purpose of expressing the sentiments of those who attend them on this subject.

The Government, as you know, has no means of stopping these proceedings, and there is no saying how far a religious flame may spread when once it is excited. I should be apprehensive that it would not confine itself even to this country, but might even extend itself to Germany, Holland, and other Protestant countries ; the political effects of such a ferment are seriously to be dreaded.

I am satisfied that the most effectual means of arresting the progress of such an evil is by a temperate interference on the part of the respective Governments. I should have suggested this long ago, if we had been sufficiently accurately informed of the real state of the facts. But I am sure no time should now be lost in making some representation to the French Government, either on our own part singly, or conjointly with our allies, which may show the interest we take in the question, and may give the French Government an opportunity of expressing their abhorrence of any persecution on the ground of religious difference, and their determination to protect all loyal subjects, to whatever communion they may belong.

I have not the least doubt of the sincere disposition of the King of France's Government to act on these principles ; but some of their adherents are suspected of very different views, and at all events some good might be done, and much evil averted, by a manifestation on the part of the King of France's Government of just principles of toleration. Looking, as they must do, to the support of Europe, it is no immaterial object to them, even in policy, not to disgust the Protestant communities in other countries.

It is very desirable, therefore, that you should have some personal communication with the Duke de Richelieu on this subject, and that you should concert with him the course which it may

be proper for you to adopt. We have not the least doubt of his liberal views, and we are persuaded that you will have no difficulty in making him feel that we are consulting the interests of France, as well as those of other countries, in not neglecting a point of so much importance.

I should likewise be glad if you would take the necessary means for obtaining accurate information on this question. It is material that we should know to what extent these persecutions and disorders have really existed in the south of France: whether they have been confined to that part of the country or have been extended to the Protestants in other provinces.

Yours, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

*To his Excellency* SIR CHARLES STUART, K.B.

There is reason to hope that the statements which had reached Lord Liverpool of any persecution of the French Huguenots, as such having been systematically carried on, were in some degree exaggerated. But throughout the south-eastern provinces, in which the Protestants were most numerous, formidable riots had taken place, and atrocious outrages had been committed; and though they arose at first from political at least as much as from religious excitement, and from the general restlessness and demoralization of the people more than from any other cause, there is no question that in many instances the Protestants had been the chief victims, the antipathy to them, which had been excited a century and a half before, having outlived every other sentiment of religion. At all events, there can hardly be two opinions about the ardent and universal humanity which dictated the letter, or about the address with which the topics are selected most likely to recommend the counsels of the writer to a Government such as that of Louis in its early days of trial and difficulty, when it was necessary to avoid, as far as might be, irritating any party, and especially the Church, in this its first moment of re-establishment, when its very consciousness of weakness might be expected to make it less tolerant of opposition.

## CHAPTER XX.

Distress of the country, and discontent—Clamours for the reduction of taxation—State of Ireland—Lord Liverpool's anticipation of the session—Canning becomes President of the Board of Control—Lord Liverpool's promises of economy—Debate on the Peace—Lord Liverpool's speech—Lord Brougham's description of Lord Liverpool's style of oratory—Lord Grenville's speech—The future finance of the country—Attacks on the Prince Regent—Ministers are defeated in the House of Commons on the property tax—Marriage of the Princess Charlotte—Feelings against the property tax—Lord Lansdowne's motion for economy—Lord Liverpool's reply—Discussions on the time for the resumption of cash payments—The Marquis of Buckingham's motion on Ireland—Liberal speech of Lord Liverpool—His views of the value of education—Growth of emigration—Bad harvest and great distress in Ireland—Canning's account of France.

IN spite of, if it may not rather almost be said because of, the unequalled triumph of the last year, when a single week of war overthrew the most formidable enemy whom this country had ever had, and when our statesmen were almost as successful as our warriors in carrying out, in the treaty of peace, the political views which they considered to afford the best promise of permanent tranquillity to Europe, the year 1816 was far from being one of ease to the Ministry. It opened with severe distress, which pervaded nearly the whole of the working classes, which inevitably soon spread upwards to the employers of labour, and which, before the end of the year, was aggravated by an unfavorable season, and a harvest, even for such seasons, remarkable for its unpro-

ductiveness. It was a matter of course that such a state of affairs should produce general discontent, which in this instance was embittered by disappointment. Distress had not been unfelt during the war, but, while that raged, it was naturally regarded as the direct parent of every suffering; and the more each individual reasoned on its causes, the more confident did he feel that in the return of peace alone was relief to be looked for; but at the same time that in that return of peace it would certainly be found. When it was seen that Peace had not the magic wand that had been attributed to her, that the distress not only continued, but was apparently more universal and more intense than ever, no one stopped to consider whether his former expectations of instant prosperity had been well founded; whether, on the contrary, the suddenness and very completeness of the change from a state of war to a state of peace under conditions which cut off the causes of all recent wars, and therefore the probability of any fresh disturbance of tranquillity, must not unavoidably induce a reaction too violent not to be at first the cause of equal, if not of greater difficulties.

The dissatisfaction thus engendered found no lack of representatives to give it utterance in either House of Parliament, and there was the greater difficulty in replying to their arguments, because they were for the most part not utterly unfounded, but merely exaggerated, and were based on principles of which the ministers themselves questioned not the soundness, but only the instant applicability. It could not be denied that some portion of the existing distress arose from the extreme heaviness of the taxation which had been forced on the Government by the necessity of making provision for the vast expenses of a war in which we had been the chief paymasters. It seemed therefore obvious that the first measure for the relief of that distress should be a diminution of that taxation, and that such diminution was rendered practicable and easy by the cessation of the cause of the



increased expenditure. The question, therefore, between the two parties turned not on the question whether such relief should be given, but only on the amount of such relief, and on the manner in which it should be afforded. On the character and chief details of the intended reductions the Opposition were understood to be preparing to contest the views of the ministers ; and not on those points only, for it was equally well known that they had resolved to call in question the policy which had prevented any alleviation of the people's burdens in the past year ; the justice of the declaration of war against Napoleon, and the necessity or wisdom of the treaties which had been made with our allies. The feeling with which Lord Liverpool regarded the course which affairs were likely to take in Parliament is expressed in a letter that he wrote to Mr. Peel a few days before the meeting of the Houses ; and some idea of the state of Ireland, to which the latter paragraphs refer, may be gathered from the previous letter, to which his is a reply.

Dublin Castle, January 14th, 1816.

DEAR LORD LIVERPOOL,

Many of the Irish members to whom Lord Castlereagh has written have told me that they consider his circular a mere matter of course, and that, unless they receive an assurance from me that their attendance at the commencement of the session is absolutely necessary, they will remain here. They represent (and really with some reason) that their presence in their respective counties is extremely useful at a time of general pecuniary distress and partial disturbance, and that the assizes commence early in March, at which their attendance as grand jurors is almost indispensable. You are aware, of course, of the different constitution and different duties of our grand juries in Ireland.

I think, however, that if I assured them that their assistance in Parliament was of material consequence, most of them would attend at the beginning of the session, but would certainly return to the assizes in March, and I fear it might be difficult to bring them again to their posts.

However, I have hitherto returned no decisive answer, and shall not do it until I hear from you, as you must be so much better able to judge of the necessity of a full attendance, and of the period when that necessity is most likely to be felt.

Our accounts from the proclaimed districts in Westmeath and Limerick are as satisfactory as we could wish. In Tipperary we are at this moment, in addition to all the transportations under the Insurrection Act, making a terrible but necessary example under the special commission we have sent there. There have been thirteen capital convictions for offences amounting to little short of rebellion, and fourteen sentenced to transportation for the destruction of a barrack. All the sentences will be carried into execution without mitigation. We find conviction attended with so many difficulties that we are obliged to be very sparing in the extension of mercy. Such is the extent of the conspiracy which pervades that unfortunate country, and such the utter disregard of perjury, that the leader in the destruction of the barrack produced twenty witnesses in his defence, some of them men of property, who perjured themselves in the grossest manner in the various attempts made to prevent a conviction. The guilt of the prisoner was, however, afterwards completely established by the confession of his fourteen associates, who, after his conviction, consented to plead guilty on condition that they should not be executed. You can have no idea of the moral depravation of the lower orders in that country; in fidelity towards each other they are unexampled, as they are in their sanguinary disposition and fearlessness of the consequences of indulging it.

We have no doubt that Mr. Baker's murder was perpetrated by five hired assassins, and we have every reason to believe that there was a party prepared to murder him on three or four different roads by which it was possible for him to have left Cashel.

I find my letter has extended to a length which I little intended when I commenced it. I shall send it by express, in order that I may have an opportunity of hearing from you before I leave Ireland.—Believe me, dear Lord Liverpool,

Ever most truly yours,

ROBERT PEEL.

*P.S.* We have had no Catholic meetings of any kind for some time past. All the faction leaders have quarrelled not only with the respectable part of their body, but still more violently, and with more cause, with each other.

MY DEAR PEEL,

Fife House, January 20th, 1816.

I have this moment received your letter, and lose no time in returning an answer to it.

It is absolutely necessary that we should have a full attendance of Irish as well as English members at the beginning of the session. It is intended at present to fix Thursday, the 15th, for the consideration of the treaties which have been concluded at Paris. Though there can be no doubt of the result of a division on this question, yet we have reason to know that any address of approbation on the treaties will be opposed, and it is very desirable that on such a question the majority should be as large as possible.

Independent, however, of this consideration, the great point of contest during the approaching session will certainly be finance, and particularly the proposal to continue the property-tax at five per cent. This measure will be brought forward as soon as the Navy and Army have been voted.

The Opposition are already availing themselves of the distress which pervades the agricultural interests in some parts of the country, to excite as much clamour as possible against the idea of continuing any part of the property tax. The contest upon it will therefore be a severe one, and it is quite impossible to be certain, or even confident, of the issue. You will judge, therefore, how important it is that every person on whom we can rely should be present.

It is not in the power of any one to judge beforehand what may arise in the course of a session of Parliament, but there is every reason to believe, from present appearances, that the great Parliamentary contest will take place before Easter, and that the Irish members can therefore be spared much better after that period than before it.

I am happy to find that you have been so successful in your convictions under the special commission. Though it is dreadful to think of so many executions as must take place in conse-

quence, yet I am thoroughly persuaded there is no chance of peace for the country except by so extensive an example as cannot fail to strike terror into the minds of the disaffected. It is lamentable to reflect that the glory and success of the country, and the total discomfiture of our enemy on the Continent, should not have had a sensible effect on the lower classes of the people of Ireland. In truth, Ireland is a political phenomenon, not influenced by the same feelings as appear to affect mankind in other countries, and the singular nature of the disorder must be the cause why it has hitherto been found impracticable to apply an effectual and permanent remedy to it.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

The Parliamentary difficulties of the Cabinet were surmounted, though not in every instance without discomfiture and mortification. The depression of trade and the distresses of the English population, though they proved of longer duration than the most desponding prophet of woe could at the time anticipate, have long passed away. But the last sentences of Lord Liverpool's letter are still as true as on the day on which they were written. Ireland is still a political phenomenon. Fifty years, prodigal of every kind of concession and indulgence, till the ingenuity of liberality seems exhausted, have restored neither prosperity nor content to that still vexed kingdom; and we shall not think it an imputation on Lord Liverpool's statesmanship if he, before the Roman Catholics had been put on a footing of complete civil equality with their Protestant fellow-subjects, was at a loss to see a remedy for the troubles of Ireland; when even the enactment of that measure, which its promoters fondly hoped would prove a healing remedy, and a long course of policy conceived and carried out in the same spirit which dictated that concession, have utterly failed to establish concord or tranquillity: the real truth, which was unsuspected in Lord Liverpool's time, being at last evident, that the root of the evil is not religious animosity, violently and mis-

chievously as that prevails in portions of the island ; but an unreasoning discontent with the distribution of property, and an impatience of its ownership by those whom, in spite of an occupation of centuries, a section of the population still persists in regarding as foreigners.

Parliament had scarcely met, and the conflicts of the session had not yet begun, when an opportunity was afforded to Lord Liverpool of making an invaluable addition to his strength in the House of Commons by the introduction of Canning into the Cabinet. Two years and a half before, when Canning accepted the embassy to Lisbon, the two friends interchanged a frank explanation of their views, and came to an understanding that the first Cabinet office that should fall vacant should be offered to the ambassador. Such a vacancy now occurred by the death of the Earl of Buckinghamshire, who had never recovered a fall from his horse in the preceding year ; and though his office, that of President of the Board of Control, was not one which had previously engaged any particular share of Canning's attention, it was nevertheless one of first-rate importance, and in one respect it was more desirable than some other posts might have been, since it gave Canning's mischievous friends, who had done him such injury before, no pretence for urging him now to claim the management of the Government business in the House of Commons, which had been the stumbling-block on the former occasion. Lord Liverpool instantly decided on inviting Canning to fill it, and the offer was made and accepted in the following letters.:

*Private.*

Fife House, 13th February, 1816.

MY DEAR CANNING,

The precarious state of Lord Bucks' health must have been known to you for some time, and the event of his death will probably have reached you before you receive this letter. I should indeed have written to you last week, if the necessity of a previous communication with the Prince Regent, and his

absence from London, had not obliged me to defer it till after the Lisbon packet had sailed.

I have constantly borne in my mind, I can assure you, the explanation which you gave me of your own views a few days before you quitted England, and I am now enabled to propose to you, with the full approbation of the Prince Regent, and the concurrence of all my colleagues, the office and situation in the Cabinet which was held by Lord Bucks.

I have no means of judging how far this particular office may be acceptable to you. In the year 1813 you were willing to have taken the Admiralty, and I have endeavoured in consequence to ascertain whether Lord Melville was disposed now to make the exchange to which he then consented. I found, however, that he is on many accounts so indisposed to quit his present situation that I should not consider myself justified in calling upon him to make a sacrifice which I really believe at this time would be most repugnant to his feelings.

I have no alternative, therefore, but to propose to you the vacant office, such as it is, and to add that, if it meets in any degree your wishes, we shall be very happy to have you amongst us.

If your decision should be to accept, I shall be obliged to you to let me have the earliest information of it, even though your return to England should be delayed for a few weeks. Your project of paying a visit to Gibraltar would in this case I suppose fall to the ground.

Our session has begun prosperously, and there is no appearance of any formidable opposition except upon questions of economy and taxation.

The present distress of the agricultural interest must be expected to affect some of our friends on the question of the continuance of the property tax ; they are likewise very desirous of getting rid of the malt tax, and several other duties which are supposed to press upon agriculture, but which can be very ill spared in the present state of our finances. I am satisfied likewise that those who raise this clamour have a narrow view of their own interest, as the restoration of public credit, the run of the funds, and the consequent fall of the interest on money will afford more relief to the existing distress of the country than any other measure of relief that could be adopted.

This notion is fortunately gaining ground, and I trust, therefore, we shall carry the measure we intend to propose with some slight modifications. At all events, the great struggle on those questions will be over before Easter.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

MY DEAR LIVERPOOL,

Torres Vedras, March 8th, 1816.

Your letter of the 13th ult. was a long time on its way to Lisbon, where it arrived (in company with letters and newspapers of the 23d) only on Sunday last, the day after the sailing of the packet for England.

I have received it upon an excursion into the country. I write upon the road, and send my letter to Lisbon to be in time for the packet of to-morrow. I will not trouble you with the course of my reflections on the subject of your letter: the result of them is that I accept your proposal. If I have doubted about it, I wish you to understand that my doubts have been as to taking office at all at the present moment, and not in any degree as to the particular office proposed to me.

You know how little I have wished that you should make any effort, or rather how sincerely I have desired that you should *not* make any, or *create* an opening for any such proposal. For many reasons it would have been infinitely more agreeable to me that no such opening should have occurred for some time to come. You will give me credit for regretting the event in which this has originated; but the offer to me having been produced in a manner thus unwished for and uncontrived, it may be a satisfaction to you to learn that you could not by any arrangement have vacated a situation more agreeable to me.

I am not the less obliged to you for recollecting what passed on a former occasion respecting the Admiralty, but I should indeed have been sorry that Lord Melville had been urged to a change "repugnant to his feelings," when, if the two offices were submitted to my option, my preference would, under present circumstances, be decidedly for the Board of Control.

As to my return to England, I fear it cannot be much accelerated. My first move, the embarkation of my family, necessarily depends upon the weather; and in France I may possibly be

detained rather longer than I should have thought necessary, when I could reckon upon returning there at my own time, and for as long as I pleased. I will interpose no avoidable delay. In reporting to the Prince Regent my answer to the proposal made to me with his Royal Highness's authority and gracious approbation, I request that you will express to his Royal Highness, in the most dutiful terms, my deep sense of his unvarying goodness towards me, and my entire devotion to his service. Return, on my behalf, to your colleagues, my acknowledgments for their expression of good will, and believe me ever,

My dear Liverpool,

Very sincerely yours,

GEORGE CANNING.

The frankness of these letters is honorable to both, and worthy of their long-standing friendship; and though Lord Liverpool had, as we see, begun to be less apprehensive of the tone and result of the impending debates than he had been, and though Canning did not reach England in time to take his share in more than one or two, and those of minor importance, yet the value of his accession to the Cabinet was not to be estimated by the extent to which he was at once brought into play: for it healed the apparent breach in the Tory party, which could hardly be looked on as united or complete while one of its brightest ornaments was unconnected with the Government; and it also gave the Administration a great increase of popularity, even with many who had hitherto distrusted it, but who, though the idea was wholly devoid of foundation, had conceived the belief that Canning's views of general politics were more liberal (to use the modern term) than those which hitherto had been acted on, and who flattered themselves that his enrolment in the list of ministers indicated an increased leaning to some of the opinions of which they themselves had hitherto been the unsuccessful advocates.

If, however, Lord Liverpool could pronounce the Opposition in Parliament during the session not very formidable,



its comparative harmlessness arose from no lack of inclination or diligence on the part of its leaders. He himself made an effort to disarm it on the very first night, by volunteering a promise of a severe revision of the different existing establishments and future expenditure of the country, as a preliminary to the adoption of "a system of rigid economy in every branch of the Government." But Lord Holland replied with a denunciation of his past policy, and a threat of making it the subject of a formal attack upon every detail connected with the recent war. He designated the principles on which the allies had embarked in it as "wicked and unjustifiable." He was almost equally vehement in his condemnation of the treaty by which the war had been terminated, refusing to approve of the restoration of Louis to the French throne, or to admit that there "was any reasonable and fair hope of protracted tranquillity to this country, or of permanent peace to the Continent." And before the end of the month he redeemed his pledge in the debate which arose when the Prime Minister presented to the Peers the treaties which had been concluded, and moved an Address to the Prince Regent commending the policy which had been pursued in every part: in "the promptitude, unanimity, and vigour with which the allied forces were brought into the field at the outset of the campaign, to which was to be attributed the early consummation of a victory by which the contest was at once brought to a successful close;" and in "the determination which had been taken to found the recent peace upon a principle of salutary precaution:" and selecting as subjects for special congratulation, first the restoration of the Bourbons, as a result which "had combined measures due to the safety of Europe with a just and liberal policy towards his Most Christian Majesty;" and secondly, the cementing of the union of Britain with her allies, as a measure from which a long tranquillity might be expected.

In the speech of which the Address thus moved was the  
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peroration, after a graceful compliment to the army and its heroic chief, Lord Liverpool felt that "he had also a right to claim a fair share of credit for himself and his colleagues;" he had a right to say that "the Government in such a trying moment had not been wanting in its duty, when, under the circumstances that then existed, it had collected and brought to bear upon the enemy, within so short a time, a body of troops capable of performing such great and important services. And might he not further say that it was a strong presumption of the soundness of that policy upon which this country had acted, that the power of the adversary which had been represented as so formidable was completely overturned by the effect of a single victory?" He proceeded to justify the principle which had guided himself and his colleagues in framing the recent treaty, and that of 1814 which had preceded it. It was not strange that the spirit of the two should have been somewhat different, since the events which had occurred in the interval had inevitably changed the feelings of the allies who dictated them. At the end of the first war a desire to guard against a recurrence of the evils caused by Napoleon's ambition was not unmingled with admiration for the splendour of his talents and pity for the greatness of his reverse; but these sentiments had been superseded by indignation at the unprovoked faithlessness with which he had broken the treaty that had still preserved him royal dignity and authority. In the breast of his chief advocate on a former occasion, Alexander, they had even given place to something like personal animosity; while all agreed that the French nation itself, by the eagerness with which it had replaced him on the throne, had made itself an accomplice in his offence, and deserved to receive a share of the punishment. It was indeed but an act of prudent precaution to lessen for the future the power of that country to plunge the whole world into war. Accordingly Lord Liverpool explained the principle of the treaty of 1814 as one "of great liberality towards the French

Government and the French nation; a liberality which some had even thought at the time, and perhaps not in every instance erroneously, had been carried too far. But he maintained that, even if there had been some want of prudence in the arrangement of details, the principle itself was just and wise. The object had been to make the Government then established in France satisfactory to all parties, and to take away all pretence for dissatisfaction and revolt." And he claimed for that policy the praise that it had taken away "all pretence of justifying the late revolt against the Bourbons," by any allegations of the severity of the conditions then imposed on France. Nor in fact did he believe that any feeling of discontent with the existing Government in France had had the slightest share in producing it; but it had been caused solely by the insubordination of the army. He defended the declaration issued by the allies on the first receipt of the intelligence of Napoleon's landing in France as a paper designed "to excite the French people themselves to repel the invasion, or, in case they had already risen for that purpose, to excite them to greater alacrity and perseverance by showing them that the allies were determined to support them." Even the treaty between Britain and her allies which preceded the resumption of the war was concluded, "while they conceived Louis still to have the means of resistance, and to be supported by a powerful party, and still to be at the head of a strong force either at Paris or in some other part of the country. But by the time that the treaty came over here, it had become known also that Louis had been forced to flee from the country altogether. And, under these new circumstances, the ministers had to consider how far they could adopt that treaty; and the result of their deliberations was that they accompanied it with a declaration which guarded against our being understood to make the restoration of the Bourbons the object of war, though still expressing our anxiety for such a termination to it, and our belief in its importance for the

peace of Europe. And the allies at Vienna fully coincided in the view thus proclaimed, and adopted a similar declaration; so that there was no engagement whatever between any part of the confederacy and the French king. The one general object of all was the general security of Europe, without reference to the interests of any particular Power or dynasty; though experience had proved that that security was essentially connected with the internal state of France, and that Europe could never be secure while the Government of France was founded upon a military force and a system of aggression and conquest." "Their lordships knew the issue of the conflict. The power which had been raised by the sword fell by the sword. It had no root in the affections of the country, or even of the two Assemblies; it rested merely on the army. And when Wellington advanced on Paris the Provisional Government, which had acted since the abdication of Buonaparte, dissolved itself, and the King returned and was immediately received into his capital. The allies had then to consider what new arrangements were to be made in order to provide for the future repose of France and of Europe. They were entitled to demand indemnity for the past and security for the future; and they had to consider how far these objects could be attained with the least possible injury to the feelings of the French Government and people. They had conflicting duties to perform. In 1814 they had acted on a principle of confidence in the French nation. That could not be repeated now; and their duty to Europe and to their own subjects required that they should insist upon some effectual security for the future tranquillity of France and of Europe.

"The treaties which had been concluded with this view were founded on these principles: first, the military occupation of France by the allied troops for a limited number of years; secondly, the pecuniary compensation which the allies were entitled to exact from the French Government; thirdly, a territorial arrangement. And, though each was

important, the first was the most essential, and that on which the others depended. There might be different opinions on the other points as to the amount of compensation or the extent of the territorial cessions to be required; but it was evident that nothing effectual of any kind could be done without a temporary occupation of a portion of France. This measure was indispensable for the due performance of the other conditions, as affording the only means of ensuring the internal tranquillity of the country. On the second point, considering the extraordinary efforts on the part of the allies which the conduct of the French had rendered necessary, the right to demand an indemnity could not be disputed, and in fact was not disputed, by the French Government; and the demands of the allies had neither exceeded justice nor the ability of the French to meet them. While, on the last point, there was no doubt that they were fairly entitled to demand a much larger cession of territory than that which had actually been required; still, if nothing had been regarded but the *right*, it might have been a question how far it was expedient to insist upon it, but under the circumstances the expediency was as clear as the right." He proceeded to explain the principle on which France had been compelled to restore the different districts which she had acquired since the commencement of the Revolution, and on which they had been allotted to their new masters, "to Prussia, to the Netherlands, and to other Powers;" and relied on the opinion of the Duke of Wellington as a justification of the measure of devoting a portion of the French contributions to the restoration of the Belgian fortresses. And having thus discussed the different details of the arrangements, he claimed a right to find "a justification of the whole system of policy which had been pursued in the consideration, which he asserted as a fact that could hardly be disputed, that a great majority, at least three-fourths, of the people of France were sincerely and ardently attached to their legitimate king. He looked on this as decisively proved

by the result of the recent elections; and, though he admitted that there was still a large disaffected party, he believed that it owed its chief strength to the regiments which had been disbanded, and which still cast a regretful eye on the profession of conquest and spoil in which they had been nurtured, and longed once more to make the sword the sole instrument of external and internal rule. At the same time the more powerful and dangerous this party was, the clearer was the necessity for the Army of Occupation. Upon the whole, England had adopted that plan of keeping military possession of the country for a time from a conviction that it was the most just, both for itself and for Europe.

“ He was aware that objections had been made to the rights of interference with other Governments. He could not conceive on what ground this objection was founded; he could not find any, either in the writings of statesmen, or in recorded treaties, or in the traditionary principles which regulated the external policy of nations. The great principle of all government in its domestic or foreign relations was self-defence, either against direct attack, or against probable or premeditated danger. The only question was the degree of evidence of the danger. It must be open and apparent; but in the case of France he would ask whether the danger had not been felt and experienced for twenty years? It had been asserted that there were no precedents for such interference. Such an objection was founded in complete ignorance of our own history. Twice in the reign of Anne, and once again in that of George II., stipulations had been made both with France and Holland which pledged those countries to assist, if need should arise, in the maintenance of the Hanoverian family on the British throne; and, even if there had been no such example, one would have thought that the French Revolution itself was an event of such a character that a precedent might in this instance have fairly been created. Nor could it be denied that there was no rational hope of

internal tranquillity or safety to any individual state in Europe without a direct interference with the domestic management of France."

He proceeded not solely to justify the restitution of the works of art to the countries which France had deprived of them, by the unanswerable argument that it was natural and equitable that, if France had acquired them as "the fruits of victory," as "fruits of victory they should now return to their original and more lawful possessors;" but he went further, and declared that "he was proud of the part which this country had borne in the transaction, because she had not taken a single statue or picture for herself: still prouder was he because she had obtained that every one of them should be restored to its original owner. Indeed so strong was his feeling on this particular point that, much as he deprecated their remaining in France, he should have preferred even that to their being sent either to this country or to any to which they did not rightfully belong."

He recapitulated with great force the offences of Napoleon against both the peace of Europe and even against the liberty of his own subjects, arguing from his severe restrictions on the liberty of the press that his sole object was "the gratification of his own will in the establishment of a complete military despotism, and in rendering his subjects mere machines." And he rose to a high strain of patriotic eloquence when he claimed "the credit of having put down this abominable system for the manly perseverance of this country, for the efforts on our part to which every quarter of the world bore honorable testimony; for what was the quarter which had not been in the course of the war the scene of some glorious achievement of Great Britain? While, though it had been objected to in former treaties that the interests of our allies had been sacrificed, and our obligations to them violated and deserted, on the present occasion they all bore cordial testimony to our good faith and generosity."

A critic who has laboriously endeavoured to disparage Lord Liverpool's reputation for ability, regarding him indeed with some degree of personal resentment for an imaginary injustice, nevertheless admits that he was "the most fair and candid of all debaters; that no advantage to be derived from a misrepresentation or even an omission ever tempted him to forego the honest and manly satisfaction of stating the fact as it was, treating his adversary as he deserved, and at least reciting fairly what had been urged against him."<sup>1</sup> And these qualities are rarely more conspicuous than in the speech of which an outline has been given, which grapples manfully with every objection that had been raised by the opponents of the Government. It must be admitted to have been a triumphant justification of the ministerial policy as a whole; and though the feelings of the present age so far differ from those which prevailed half a century ago that the doctrine of non-interference is now generally recognised as the policy not only of wisdom but of justice, yet even now there must be admitted to be a most cogent force in Lord Liverpool's argument that the whole case of the French Revolution and of its effects was so exceptional as to justify a course of action which under more ordinary circumstances might not have been adopted.

But if by anticipation he had refuted, he had not silenced the Opposition. They were reinforced on the occasion by Lord Grenville, whose speech was, however, marked by more than usual inconsistency; for he asserted as strongly as Lord Liverpool himself, the propriety of our interference in the arrangement of the French Government, as a matter on which "not only the happiness but the safety of England depended." He expressed a warm

<sup>1</sup> Lord Brougham's "Statesmen and Times of George III." Lord Brougham in another place attacks him and Lord Eldon for refusing him a silk gown, though the real truth was that the objection came from George IV. himself, who never forgave the language he had used on the Queen's trial.



approval of the restitution of the works of art, and rejected with scorn the allegation that "the exaction from France of territorial cessions was an injury which the people of France would never forget, and one which would afford a pretext for the renewal of war at no distant period." He rather complained that more had not been demanded; and, referring to the acquisitions on the frontier of the Netherlands which had been made by Louis XIV., condemned the Government for having neglected the opportunity which had now been offered of re-establishing the barrier against the enterprising spirit of France, which had then been thrown down. Since the Peace of Utrecht, "We had never had such an opportunity of asserting that which ought to be the glory of this country, we had never had such an opportunity of crushing the invincible ascendancy of France;" and he was vehement and bitter in his denunciation of the ministers for having abstained from availing themselves of it. But, while thus insisting on the duty of stripping France of territories which she had possessed for above a hundred years, he disapproved of levying a pecuniary contribution on her as "a condition of all others the most humiliating:" and, with yet greater earnestness denounced the temporary occupation of the country by the allies, as "part of a settled system to raise this country into a military Power. Standing armies had been the ruin of the most renowned nations of the world. It was her soldiers who had hastened the fall of Rome; it was the standing army of France which had enabled Louis XIV. to subvert the free constitutions of France, and had deprived the unfortunate Louis XVI. first of his power, then of his crown, and lastly of his life; and Britain, the palladium of liberty, while she was pursuing steadily the steps of her neighbours in military renown, was pursuing with equal pace that destruction which was consequent on military government." He concluded by moving an amendment expressing a disapproval of the omission to curtail further the territory

and power of France; a measure which "every motive both of justice and of prudence required," condemning in still stronger terms the occupation of France by a part of our army, as "the abandonment of a system which was alone consonant to the fundamental principles of our constitution, since it was the maintenance of a great military force in constant preparation for action; while hitherto this country had never aspired to be one of the great military Powers of Europe, but had risen to prosperity and greatness by a contrary system."

It was not strange that such a speech failed to make any great impression on the House. Any one might well be excused from seeing that it was a greater humiliation to France to require a pecuniary indemnity for the expenses of the war, than to exact from it a cession of territories which it had possessed for several generations; especially when it was recollected that the demand of money from the nations which he had subdued, had been a constant practice of Napoleon himself; so that the enforcement of such a payment from the existing generation of Frenchmen was in fact but a claim for the restitution of what the same generation had received. But to require the cession of territories conquered by Louis XIV. would have been the establishment of a principle not only wholly different from that which justified the exaction of money, but pregnant with danger to the peace of the world. It was true, beyond a question, that most of the wars waged by Louis XIV. had been wars of unprovoked aggression, prompted by the evil lust of conquest and false glory. Territories acquired by these wars might justly have been reclaimed at Ryswick or at Utrecht. But there must be a statute of limitations for nations as for individuals. And, if the undisturbed possession of a province for above a century is not to deprive its former owners of a title to reclaim it, there could be no such thing as security in the world. Even Lord Grenville's historical references were as unsound as

his political principles; and it must have been new to those of his hearers who had studied the history of France to learn that she had enjoyed a free constitution under Richelieu. In fact, Lord Holland, though supporting his amendment, avoided adopting his arguments, but stated frankly that the vote which he was about to give would be dictated by his disapproval of the conduct of the allies in treating Napoleon on his return from Elba as an enemy, and still more in confining him at St. Helena, a proceeding which he characterised as "unjustifiable and ungenerous." The ministerial majority was 64; when the Opposition again divided the House on the question of the military establishments, it rose to 70. In the House of Commons the victory of the Government was even more decisive;<sup>1</sup> and there could be no doubt that on this, the foreign policy of the ministers, the verdict of Parliament expressed the sentiments of the nation in general.

Lord Liverpool, however, was not mistaken when he anticipated a harder battle on the question of finance. Many circumstances combined to cause great excitement on that subject. It was a year of general and severe distress. The sudden transition from a state of war to a state of peace was for the moment in itself rather an aggravation than an alleviation of the difficulties of the commercial classes. The farmers and landed proprietors were suffering from an unusually bad harvest. The re-establishment of peace on what at last seemed a secure foundation, since the disturber of it was in our own hands, obviously rendered a reduction of the war taxation practicable; and, as is not unnatural in such a state of affairs, every one over-estimated the extent to which that reduction might be carried, and each class desired that the principal portions of the intended relief might be afforded to itself. The ministers themselves were as

<sup>1</sup> In the Lords the numbers were, for the Government, 104 *v.* 40; in the Commons, 240 *v.* 77.

resolved on retrenchment as the Opposition were eager to extort it from them (so that the questions likely to arise were only those of detail, not of principle); but, being influenced in their decisions by a feeling of responsibility from which the Opposition was free, they inevitably formed a very different opinion of the degree and manner in which the reductions to be made should be arranged. On details of this kind, therefore, they were prepared for a vigorous struggle; but they had not expected it to take the form, which on more than one occasion it assumed, of a personal attack on the Prince Regent. In the course of January, while he was at Brighton, his Royal Highness had been attacked by a severe fit of the gout, which had prevented him from opening Parliament in person; and as he remained at the Pavilion, on the erection and embellishment of which he was devoting a great portion of his attention and of his income, the opponents of the Ministry, some of whom were undoubtedly in some degree unfriendly to himself, took occasion to denounce his absence from London at that season as a dereliction of his duties; while others inveighed in plain terms against the cost of the new marine palace, and of a small house in Windsor Park, known as the Cottage, and in later years as the Royal Lodge, which was being altered and fitted up as a royal residence on a smaller scale. One member, in presenting a petition from his constituents, praying for the exercise of a rigid economy in every department of the State, expressed a hope that the House "would hear no more of that squanderous and lavish profusion which in a certain quarter resembled more the pomp and magnificence of a Persian satrap seated in all the splendour of Oriental state, than the sober dignity of a British prince, seated in the bosom of his subjects. He hoped, too, that they should hear no more of expenditures on thatched cottages that were hardly fit for princes." The English of this harangue might be questionable, as was the consistency of the invective against the

Pavilion and the Cottage, the one as being too gorgeous and the other as being too mean. But it could not be wondered at that the Regent conceived himself personally offended and insulted by such language; and by other speeches animated with a similar spirit. Indeed, so blind at this moment was the animosity of the Opposition leaders against the ministers, and against the Prince himself as being supposed to regard them with approval, that a proposal to raise the salary of two hard-worked officers, the Secretaries of the Admiralty, was denounced as "a profligate and scandalous job," planned and perpetrated to put the public money into the hands of two "court favourites." The expenses of the Prince's buildings had in fact been defrayed from his privy purse, and not from the public revenues; but Lord Liverpool had seen so clearly the importance, at a time when the cry for economy was so universal, of avoiding any appearance of extravagant and unnecessary outlay on the part of the head of the Government, that he took upon himself privately to suggest the discontinuance of the works at Brighton for a time; and the Regent, much to his credit, since the Pavilion was an object in which he greatly interested himself, received his advice with perfect good humour, and at once adopted it. Publicly, in their places in Parliament, Lord Liverpool and Lord Castlereagh, as indeed their duty as his ministers required of them, rebutted every insinuation to the Prince's disparagement, and their exertions were so far successful that no one subsequently ventured to renew the attacks, whether openly or covertly.

Still, the fact of such language having been uttered at all within the walls of Parliament indicated a dangerous spirit; and, as at the same time the ministers were defeated in the House of Commons on one most important point of their financial policy,<sup>1</sup> Lord Liverpool became doubtful whether he might be able to carry on the Government,

<sup>1</sup> The property tax was thrown out by a majority of 238 to 201.

and in the following letter to Sir B. Bloomfield, the equerry to whom, during the Prince's illness, his communications were usually addressed, explained his feelings on the subject :

*Secret.*

Fife House, March 21st, 1816.

MY DEAR SIR,

I received your letter by the post this morning. If the marriage cannot take place on the 4th, it had better at once be fixed for the Tuesday or Thursday in Easter week. Those persons who are expected to attend it must have some time to prepare their dresses. The uncertainty which now prevails respecting it is very inconvenient to many.

I come now to a matter of more importance.

The proceeding last night in the House of Commons was most unpleasant. A direct vote of censure upon the Government was rejected by a majority of only twenty-nine ; and as I am well informed, if it had not been for Brougham's speech, which was little short of treason, and created a universal disgust amongst all parties, we should probably have been left in a minority.

It becomes necessary, therefore, for me to convey to his Royal Highness the information, that the Government certainly hangs by a thread ; that the victory which has been obtained against us on the property tax, and the determination since taken of conceding the loan malt tax, has not had the least effect in conciliating those who have deserted us ; and that the spirit of the House of Commons is as bad now as at any period of the present session, or indeed as at any time within my recollection.

Under these circumstances, both Lord Castlereagh and myself are of opinion that it is of the utmost importance that the Prince Regent should come to town the very first moment he can do it without risk.

The country is indeed in a state in which his ministers ought to have the opportunity of daily, and even hourly, access to him. Decisions which ought not to be taken without his Royal Highness's concurrence must, at times like these, often be taken without the possibility of the delay which would arise

in consequence of a communication between London and Brighton.

In addition to these considerations, the Lord Chancellor has directed a search to be made, whether a Recorder's Report has ever been held out of London. We can find no instance of it, even in any period of the King's illness; and the Chancellor adds that he should be afraid to have execution done upon the authority of an unusual proceeding.

I must beg of you to submit all these observations to his Royal Highness's most anxious consideration, and I am sure he will see the necessity of coming to town as soon as he can bear the motion of a carriage.

I would only further add, on the subject of the marriage, that I think there would be many objections to the fixing it on the 5th or 6th: the 5th is a Friday, and a day consequently on which marriages do not usually take place in Lent. The 6th is on a Saturday, and the day immediately before Passion Week. If it cannot be fixed therefore on Thursday, the 4th, it had better be put off till Easter week.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

To MAJOR-GENERAL SIR BENJAMIN BLOOMFIELD.

The Prince roused himself to write a brief note in reply :

Pavilion, Brighton, March 24th, 1816.

MY DEAR LIVERPOOL,

I will not suffer Arbuthnot to return to you without being the bearer of a line in my own handwriting, briefly to thank you and your colleagues for all your principles, and firm and steady feelings towards me during the present storm which rages, and which I both hope and believe, ere it be very long, must and will subside, and you may depend upon my most resolute, firm, and persevering support to the very utmost. You have seen me before pretty highly tried, and you shall find me now, as at all other times, true to the backbone. Arbuthnot will enter into all other matters.

Always most sincerely and affectionately yours,

GEORGE P. R.

It was indeed to the Prince's own resolution to suffer no change in the Administration, but to persevere, in spite of all opposition, in the policy already marked out, doing, if not all that was desirable, as much as was practicable, that we are to attribute the decision at which the Cabinet arrived to remain in office, when their own inclinations would have led them to retire after the defeat on the property tax, which will be mentioned presently. The language which some of the Opposition held respecting the Prince had been so personally insulting that their resignation at such a time would have had the appearance of handing him over to his personal enemies, and an event, to which one of the letters above quoted alludes, was at hand, which it might be hoped would in some degree lead the most violent of his assailants to change their tone, from the current of sympathy with the royal family which it was calculated to awaken. The Princess Charlotte was extremely popular, and a fresh marriage had been arranged for her which was generally understood to have been mainly dictated by her own choice, and which, brief as was the period for which she herself was to be allowed to enjoy its happiness, has, in the connexion with the Coburg family which it originated, produced lasting effects on the empire. On the 2d of May she was married to a younger son of the reigning Duke of Saxe-Coburg, Prince Leopold, and for a year and a half the young pair set the kingdom an example of quiet domestic virtue, which, even for the short time which it lasted, was not without its benefit to the people, who had been of late but too much accustomed to see a different taste animating its princes; and which, repeated as it has been under almost precisely similar circumstances in our own day, has greatly purified and raised the whole tone of society among all classes of the nation.

It has been said that the ministers were defeated on the question of the property tax. First devised by the genius of Pitt, adopted and increased by the Whigs who had



succeeded to office on his death, it had of late years excited almost universal discontent, not perhaps so much from the actual amount of the burden which it imposed as from the way in which, from its directness, it obtruded itself on the notice of those on whom it was levied. The consumer of foreign produce, though in reality subjected for such articles to a far higher rate of taxation, was hardly conscious of the degree to which the duty augmented the price of his purchases. He had at all events the satisfaction of feeling that, if he pleased, he could escape the tax by abstaining from the purchase; but, with respect to the property tax, he could neither shut his door against the collector nor his eyes to the amount exacted from him. Merchants, too, and persons engaged in trade, felt even a stronger objection to being yearly required to disclose the results of their commerce, its profits, or, it might be, its losses. And these motives operated so generally, that there was scarcely one class in the kingdom of which a large portion did not eagerly add its signature to petitions praying for the removal of the tax. A mistaken idea which had got abroad that, when it had been originally proposed, the ministers had undertaken to remove it at the termination of the war, gave strength to the outcry. So irresistible had been the clamour against it, that in the preceding year, as we have seen, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had voluntarily abandoned it, though in the unexpected renewal of hostilities he had been compelled again to have recourse to it. Nor did any one, in the greatness and suddenness of the emergency, resist his proposal. But this year the clamour against it was revived with greater vehemence than ever; petitions for its removal, more numerous than ever petitions had been before, poured into the House of Commons from all quarters and from all classes; and, though the Chancellor of the Exchequer voluntarily proposed to reduce it by one-half, substituting a tax of five per cent. for the ten per cent. of former years; while

Lord Castlereagh supported him in a speech displaying a profound knowledge of the subject, and a remarkable power of close and luminous argument ; they were defeated by a considerable majority. The debate was animated, and on the part of the opponents of the tax it might be called angry. One speaker even charged those who might support the tax with abandoning their constituents to curry favour with the ministers ; and it is probable that the fear of this imputation influenced many, though not a few of those who generally supported the Administration, such as Wilberforce and Wellesley Pole, were on this occasion arrayed against them. A division of 238 against 201 decided that the tax should cease ; and this decision compelled the Chancellor of the Exchequer to continue, during peace, the system of raising loans, which might have been looked on as an expedient far more proper to be reserved solely for times of war than any tax, however burdensome or unpopular.

The measures of taxation were settled in the House of Commons, but the question of what reductions in the expenditure might be practicable was more than once brought before the Lords. On the 15th of March it was made the subject of a special motion by Lord Lansdowne, who, without binding himself to any particular details, urged the Peers to present an address to the Regent, begging him to direct such reductions in the military estimates as might "render them consistent with the real interests of the country, and conformable to the practice of our ancestors and the established principles of the Constitution." His arguments, besides those that were founded on the general distress of the country, which rendered economy a duty more than usually imperative, were, with a singular disregard of common sense, drawn chiefly from periods long antecedent, when the circumstances of the kingdom were widely different from the time of the speaker. He referred to Sir Robert Walpole's opinion as to the utmost magnitude which a stand-

ing army could be permitted to attain without danger to the public liberties ; he quoted the amount of the force which William III. had thought it sufficient to keep on foot : forgetting or omitting to point out that the population of the kingdom had been trebled since the Revolution ; had been more than doubled since the Administration of Walpole ; and that, besides our acquisition of Malta, and many other islands both in the Eastern and Western seas, the two great continents of India and Canada had since been added to our empire. Lord Wellesley, who supported him, made a speech strangely inconsistent with his own practice and the value which he had set upon a great military force while in Bengal. Lord Grenville, adopting Lord Lansdowne's views, supported them by arguments, or rather propositions, which were still more strange, and certainly more at variance with the national feeling ; for he declared that if our conquests in the West Indies and Guiana could only be preserved by military garrisons he would prefer surrendering them, or even paying their former owners to take them back, to allowing them to form an excuse for maintaining a large military establishment in time of peace.

Lord Liverpool, in his reply, followed his invariable rule of avoiding no part of the question. He was not even afraid to furnish his opponents a further precedent for a small military establishment in the force which Mr. Pitt had been contented to provide in 1792. But he quoted the precedent to condemn it. Pitt had rested his proposals on the conviction which he expressed of the probability of the permanence of peace, and Burke had supported him with a declaration that France had disarmed herself, and rendered herself incapable of war : "France was blotted out of the map of Europe." It was superfluous to point out how complete and mischievous had been the mistake into which they both fell, though "the one was perhaps the greatest political philosopher, the other certainly the greatest practical statesman, that

ever existed. But while we admired the virtues, while we respected the talents, and while in most instances we were anxious to imitate the example, of our great predecessors, we ought even from their occasional mistakes and miscalculations to derive some lessons of wisdom and security." This was the statesmanlike manner of reading history: not following precedents with blind fidelity, and without a moment's consideration whether the circumstances of the present day admitted of their application; but examining first the results of a former policy, and then, if they proved it to have been judicious and safe, adapting it to the changes which the lapse of time could not fail to have wrought in the condition of the kingdom. And in this spirit, after going through with the greatest minuteness, and with a correctness of statement that none could call in question, the different details of the calls which the country now made on the services of her soldiers, he declared that, though the force now proposed to be kept up was larger than former ministers had demanded, it was "not a whit greater in proportion to the growth of the country and its necessities than it had been in the best days of our history." The House agreed with him by a majority which more than doubled the number of Lord Lansdowne's followers; and so manifest was the superiority of the Government to its opponents in the House of Lords in debating power, that during the remainder of the session they were almost silenced, and all attempts at a systematic opposition were laid aside.

Indeed during the latter part of the session no question of importance came before Parliament except the bill for postponing till the summer of 1818 the obligation of the Bank to resume cash payments, the return to which had originally been fixed at six months after the conclusion of the war. It would hardly be worth remarking that a minister responsible, and at all times wisely anxious, for the maintenance of public credit should have laid it

down, as Lord Liverpool on this occasion did lay it down, that it was one of the first duties of the Government to provide for the return to such payments at the earliest possible moment, were it not that some writers on political economy have not only controverted that opinion, but have fancied themselves able to trace to its adoption the great financial difficulties which towards the close of Lord Liverpool's ministerial career caused such widespread distress in the kingdom. A more suitable occasion for examining the question will arise hereafter. On the present occasion the only opposition to the measure of the Government came from Lord Lauderdale, who recommended a substitution of 1817 for 1818, but he forbore to press his amendment to a division ; and the superior judgment of the ministers was afterwards proved by the fact that eventually even 1818 was found to be too early a date, and the period during which notes continued to be a legal tender was by almost unanimous consent extended for an additional year.

The condition of Ireland was as usual a cause of the deepest anxiety to the Government. In the early part of the spring the Marquis of Buckingham had brought it before the House of Lords, professing to see the cause of its distresses, not in the mismanagement of the present Administration, but in the system which had prevailed for generations, and which he described as one of governing Ireland on a principle of disunion and division, setting one party against the other, instead of trying to extinguish animosities. His proposed remedies, however, amounted to nothing more than the old prescription of Catholic emancipation, with the addition of a commutation of tithe ; and the debate which took place on his motion was not so memorable for any proposals or arguments which were adduced by the mover, as for the declaration of the Prime Minister that " he was willing to admit that the system of government originally established for Ireland, and which had long prevailed, had been radically defective and vicious.

It had been a system of shortsighted policy, that sacrificed the real interests of Ireland to the supposed interests of Great Britain. He called them supposed interests, because true and enlightened policy demanded that the prosperity of each country should be equally promoted, since the one could not flourish while the other was in a state of decay." At the same time he affirmed that many years had elapsed since this system had been abandoned, "every plan had been altered, and every exertion had been used to ameliorate the state of Ireland." And in accordance with these more modern principles of policy, of which, as we have seen, he himself while Home Secretary had been no lukewarm or indolent supporter or exponent, he now expressed an opinion that, "though the right to tithes stood on the same footing in Ireland as in England, yet, under the peculiar circumstances of the former country, it might not be unfair nor inexpedient to consider whether there some commutation of the tithe system might not be devised." But he placed more reliance on the conduct of the richer classes of the Irish themselves than on any legislation; and, though hitherto statesmen in general had given but little heed to education as a means of bettering the external condition of the poor, Lord Liverpool now placed it in the first rank, and declared that the first step towards this relief must be to educate the lower orders of Ireland. "The non-residence of persons of fortune" he looked on as one cause of their poverty, but "the ignorance of the poorer classes was a still greater evil;" and those who are best acquainted with the country are those who will most clearly see the wisdom of this opinion; for the indisposition of the lower classes to steady work is manifestly the direct fruit of their ignorance: and though Lord Liverpool was apparently of opinion that it was not so much on the State that the task of providing the means of education ought to be imposed as on the property of the richer inhabitants of each district, great credit is certainly due to his early appreciation and distinct assertion

of the power of this great remedy for moral and social discontent.

Meanwhile those Irish on whom the distress pressed with the greatest weight were seeking to aid themselves, though not so much by encountering and overcoming as by fleeing from the evil. The following letter from Mr. Peel shows how strong the desire of emigration had already become :

Irish Office, June 24th, 1816.

DEAR LORD LIVERPOOL,

I think I should be chargeable with a great omission of duty if I did not, previously to my departure from this country to Ireland, call your attention to the great and increasing extent of emigration from Ireland to the United States of America.

If emigration was confined to the south of Ireland, where the population is so dense and disproportionate to the means of employing it, I should consider it a benefit to the country. As tending to increase the population of the United States, it might possibly operate to the prejudice of British interests ; but, so far as Ireland is concerned, I do not think she would suffer at all by an emigration from the south of ten times the extent of that which at present takes place.

But, unfortunately, the northern inhabitants are the most disposed to emigrate. I had this day a letter from Lord Whitworth, which states that on the last Council-day there were upwards of 700 applications from the north of Ireland for permission to leave it, in almost all cases for the United States. At the preceding Council there were, I believe, about 680, and a Council is generally held in Ireland once a week. I think this diminution of the Protestant population of Ireland very unfortunate ; but I think it still more unfortunate that not only this country should lose so many industrious and valuable inhabitants (valuable peculiarly as residents in Ireland), but that the United States should reap the advantage from their departure.

It may be impossible to prevent emigration, but it seems to me to be not impossible to secure to one part of the empire the benefit which is resigned by another, and by holding out ample encouragement to settle in the Canadas, or other parts

of our North American possessions, to contribute to their future strength and resources.

How this encouragement can be best afforded I must leave to others to determine. I know it cannot be afforded without considerable expense; but I much doubt whether the saving of that expense at present (necessary as all savings now are) will prove true economy in the end.

Believe me, dear Lord Liverpool,

Yours most truly,

ROBERT PEEL.

The desire to quit the island grew stronger in the autumn, when a long continuance of almost uninterrupted bad weather was found to have nearly destroyed every kind of crop all over the country. A more melancholy account of a harvest has scarcely ever been laid before a minister than that which Peel transmitted to Lord Liverpool in October: and to the want of food another privation, far less usual and almost equally unendurable, was added, that of fuel. Generally that was abundant, and "made amends to the Irish peasant for the wretchedness of his hovel and the want of clothing." But this year even the turf was spoiled by the heavy rains; and Peel saw no prospect but that "of calamities for which it was impossible to suggest a remedy." Before the end of the year he ventured to propose the grant of a small sum to the poor of Dublin, but it was so small as to be valuable only as a recognition of their distress, and an acknowledgment of the duty of the Government to alleviate it, and to show as much sympathy for the poor of the Irish as of the English metropolis. The money was promptly given, and seems to have been received with great gratitude. A fortnight later Lord Liverpool writes to Peel that "he is happy to hear that the grant of 2,000*l*. from the Prince Regent has had so good an effect." And he seems at the moment to think Ireland less contented than England; for he adds, "Our prospects on this side



of the water are rather improving ; but there continues to exist a very bad spirit in the country ; and I fear we must look forward to a stormy and troublesome session."

A letter from Lord Liverpool to Lord Castlereagh shows the constant and minute supervision which he exercised over every department of the State :

October 28th, 1816.

MY DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

I deferred writing to you till I came to town and saw what was the state of public business. In your own department I do not find that there is anything of importance except the further intelligence that has been received of the Portuguese projects in South America.

The manner in which this information has come into our hands renders it unnecessary for us to take any step upon it at present ; but the conduct of the Brazilian Government in this business is quite inconceivable, unless indeed you could suppose that there is some secret understanding between them and the Spanish Court.

The project of obtaining Portugal as a compensation for South America has at times been in the heads of certain Spanish councillors. I should doubt very much, however, the practicability of uniting the two countries ; and, even if it could be accomplished, it would certainly not be consistent with the general system of Europe, nor favorable, I think, from political views. I quite agree with you, however, that we are not called upon to stir in this question at present, and that it is very desirable to gain time.

I send you enclosed the state of our Consolidated Fund on the 10th of October. It is far more satisfactory than we had reason to expect. You will observe that the great deficiency is upon the Customs, and that the Excise and Assessed Taxes, which are the true criterion of internal prosperity, have undergone no diminution. We shall have, however, considerable difficulties on the subject of finance in the next session, for though the surplus of this quarter is half a million more than was expected, it does not make up for the deficiency of the last, which you recollect was about 2,200,000*l*.

We have plenty of money for every branch of the public service, and we have accordingly agreed to-day to fix the meeting of Parliament for the 28th of July next.

I am sorry to say we have had some unpleasant information respecting the Lord Chancellor's department, which proves that there is a desire to evade our Civil List arrangements. We have determined to adopt a course I am sure you will approve, as it will, I trust, enable us to stop all these projects in the bud.

Believe me to be, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

Another letter, too, which I find among Lord Liverpool's papers, addressed to a general who conceived himself aggrieved by the appointment of another officer to a situation which he himself coveted, is worth preserving, as showing, firstly, the vexatious character of the applications and remonstrances to which a minister is exposed, and, secondly, the conscientiousness with which Lord Liverpool laid down for himself, and the firmness with which he adhered to, the rule of looking to no object but the efficiency of the public service. We shall find more than one occasion of proving that it was not to military appointments alone that he applied the principle.

*Private.*

Walmer Castle, 20th November, 1816.

DEAR SIR,

I have received the favour of your letter, and, with all due respect for your personal and military character, you must allow me to say that, in the course of a political life of now more than twenty years, I never heard it intimated that when Government, in the exercise of its due discretion, recommends for a situation, military or political, the individual whose appointment they think upon the whole most expedient for the public service, any other person, however meritorious, has a right to consider himself degraded, because he may happen to be a senior officer, and is not the object of their choice, and this at a time when he is wholly unconnected with the staff or particular service to

which the appointment relates. Nor can I agree, upon the same principle, that the person so passed by is entitled to compensation for the disappointment he may suppose himself to have experienced.

If such a principle were admitted, all discretion and choice would at once be taken from the ministers of the Crown. I certainly could not submit to this as the rule of my conduct, nor would I remain in my present situation, if it was not understood that I was to have the same discretion as had been enjoyed by former ministers, viz. that of advising my sovereign on all questions of public trust, according to the best of my judgment, upon my responsibility, without any obligation of assigning the reasons of that advice, except to the sovereign to whom it is given, to my colleagues with whom I am acting, or to Parliament if they should require it.

The very peculiar circumstances under which you were succeeded by the Duke of Wellington in Portugal induced the Government to be of opinion, not that you had a right (for there can be no right in such matters), but that you had a liberal claim to consideration; and the very first opportunity was taken of giving you a distinguished mark of the confidence of Government. I never could regret your appointment to the Cape of Good Hope upon any other ground, than that it might afterwards be made use of as a precedent in cases to which it bore no analogy.

I cannot conclude without adverting to a topic in your letter of considerable delicacy. You must permit me to say that the sentiments of the sovereign or of his Royal Highness the Commander-in-chief can only be properly known by their acts, or through the usual official channels of communication.

To those sentiments, when given in the regular course of business, it is my duty to pay all possible attention and respect; but I must protest against the first impressions and feelings of these illustrious persons (if accidentally made known) being afterwards used to fetter the discretion of Government upon points upon which neither the sovereign nor the Commander-in-chief have received the opinions of the ministers of the Crown, and before they may be acquainted with many circumstances which ought to influence their determination.

With regard to the opinion of the Lord Lieutenant, I must likewise say that, if that opinion was ever given with a view to its being acted upon through any other channel than that of Lord Sidmouth or of myself, it was a very great irregularity. I have no doubt, however, that your statement is correct ; but I think it necessary to add that I am confident that, on the occasion of the *late* vacancy, the Lord Lieutenant never expressed to any one his desire that the appointment of Commander-in-chief in Ireland should be conferred upon you.

I have the honour to be, with great respect,

Dear Sir, your very faithful, humble servant,

LIVERPOOL.

Canning spent a month of the autumn in Paris ; and the following letter from him gives an interesting account of the state of France, where the King had recently issued an ordinance changing the former system of election to the Chamber of Deputies, and had dissolved the Chamber in order to convoke a new one, elected in accordance with his new regulations. It could not be denied that his position was full of difficulty ; the most strange and perplexing feature of it being, perhaps, that the most vigorous opposition which the ministers of his choice had to encounter came from the Royalist party, who claimed to understand his interests better than they and to be more attached to the due maintenance of his authority and dignity than himself.

*Private.*

Paris, November, 1816.

MY DEAR LIVERPOOL,

There can be no doubt, I think, but that the result of the elections has been favorable to the Ministry, and the King's speech appears to be well calculated to strengthen them, and to soften or divide their opponents. What is said in it of the clergy meets one imputation against the Government, viz. that they were disposed to leave that body in a state of neglect and destitution ; while on the other hand it is so guarded as not to alarm the fears of the possessors of confiscated Church

property. What is said of the royal family is, I take for granted, directed against the charge, currently reported and believed, of an intention *somewhere* to change the line of succession upon the demise of the King. That such an intention *does* exist among some of those who side with the ministers against the Royalists I certainly should be inclined to believe, but that the party entertaining such a project have any considerable strength or consistency I cannot think. The Royalists contend that the disavowal of it by the King, in a speech known to be literally *his own*, proves only that *he* is not privy to such a project, which nobody supposed him to be; but I think it must be admitted that the public allusion to such a suspected project goes a good way towards defeating it. The Royalists take much to heart the last words of the speech, but upon the whole I have not heard that they complain of the general tenour of it. You will learn from Stuart's despatches the defeat of the Royalists in the House of Peers on the choice of secretaries, and the success of the ministers in the House of Deputies on the composition of the bureaux. I confess that these things have been carried with a higher hand than I expected, I believe than the ministers up to a very late period expected themselves. Nobody has been sanguine all along, except Pozzo. The very intention of proroguing the Chamber for a while, which certainly was not abandoned till a few days before the meeting, must have grown out of a distrust of their own strength, which the meeting appears to have dissipated.

I am most anxious to be present at a debate in the Chamber of Deputies. The first that is likely to occur is, I understand, on the Budget, on the 15th. In the course of the week after I shall turn my steps towards home.

The Duke of Wellington, I hope, has some notion of being able to afford relief in the charge though not in the numbers of the army. The most serious matter here is after all, perhaps, the failure of the harvest and the vintage.

Ever sincerely yours,

GEORGE CANNING.

*P.S.* Madame Moreau, I find, is not in Paris, I hope she will be here before my departure. Madame de Staël is arrived; she

is violent against the Ultras, but not very warmly in favour of the Ministry. The chief object of her hostility, however, is the alliance which has placed 150,000 men on the frontiers of France.

Talleyrand is here since the day before the opening of the session: he is said to hold himself aloof from all parties. The Ultras, I suspect, thought it not unlikely that he might join them.

## CHAPTER XXI.

Great discontent among the working classes—Machine-breaking—The Regent is fired at—Committees are appointed in both Houses of Parliament to investigate papers laid before them—Their reports—The Habeas Corpus Act is suspended—Lord Liverpool's defence of the Government—Lord Grey's disapproval of open-air meetings—Letter from Mr. Southey—Letter from Mr. Coleridge—Lord Holland censures our treatment of Buonaparte—Letter from Sir Thomas Reade at St. Helena—State of France—A Committee on the Poor Laws is appointed—Letters from Lord Hastings in India—Death of the Princess Charlotte—Improvement in the prosperity of the country—Discontent of the Royalists in France—Auguries of a fresh Revolution.

THE year 1817 witnessed a state of things for which, if we are to seek a prototype in our history, we must go back to the days of Jack Cade and Wat Tyler. It has been already mentioned that the previous year had been one of considerable distress to the industrial classes. There had been a great stagnation of trade; numbers of artisans and labourers were thrown out of work; the harvest had been bad; corn, and indeed food of all kinds, rose to a high price; and there were not wanting demagogues to trade on the discontent which idleness and poverty never fail to engender, and to excite the populace to disturbance and riot. In some places tumultuous gangs rose on the manufacturers and destroyed the machines, to whose introduction they ascribed the scarcity of employment. In others the rioters still more senselessly set fire to the stores of grain, aggravating by their destruc-

tion the most painful of the evils from which they were suffering. And in December a mob which had been collected at Spa Fields, on the outskirts of London, under pretence of deciding on a petition to the Prince Regent, after exhibiting the real character of their objects by parading the streets with a tricolour flag, the emblem of the French Revolution, pillaged a number of shops, especially those of gunsmiths and dealers in arms of any kind, and spread terror through all the eastern side of the metropolis.

Disorders of such a kind usually increase, for a time, both in extent and violence; and it was not long before the ministers learnt that a very extensive conspiracy against order, property, and the law existed in many counties, which, if not crushed in time, might develop itself into open insurrection. The very day that Parliament reassembled, the 25th of January, they even received a terrible proof that some of the conspirators were more dangerous and more desperate than previous intelligence had led them to suspect. As the Prince Regent was returning through the Park from the House of Lords, the windows of his carriage were pierced by two bullets, which were believed to have been fired from an air gun (a weapon which had notoriously been employed against the King himself in 1795). And when the attempt at assassination had failed, the carriage was pelted and the other windows were broken with showers of stones. It was evident that no time was to be lost in taking steps to quell the spirit which had prompted such an outrage; and accordingly at the beginning of the next week Lord Sidmouth, as Home Secretary, brought down to Parliament a message from the Regent, inviting the two Houses to take into their "immediate and serious consideration papers which would be laid before them respecting meetings and combinations in the metropolis and different parts of the kingdom, evidently calculated to endanger the public tranquillity, to alienate the affections



of his Majesty's subjects from his Majesty's person, and to bring into hatred and contempt the whole system of our laws and constitution." The message was in fact little more than a practical commentary on a sentence in the speech with which the Regent had opened Parliament; expressive of his confidence that both Houses "would feel a just indignation at the attempts which had been made to take advantage of the distresses of the country for the purpose of exciting a spirit of sedition and violence." But it provoked the ill-temper of the Opposition in no ordinary degree. One peer, Lord Grosvenor, declared that "the disaffection which existed, whether great or trivial, had been provoked by the disposition which had been manifested, on many occasions, by the ministers, to set their faces against every species of reform;" while another, Lord Holland, was not ashamed to hint that the message had been prompted by "an intention to create a false alarm throughout the country." The debate which took place on the measures to which the Ministry eventually had recourse will afford a fitter opportunity for showing Lord Liverpool's judgment of the whole condition of affairs; at the moment he contented himself with proving, from other paragraphs of the royal speech, that he and his colleagues in framing the speech had brought no charge against the great body of the people, "whom they believed to be firmly attached to the established constitution;" but at the same time he reminded the House that, "at many periods of the history of this country, well-meaning persons had been misled by the arts and delusions of others;" therefore, as he argued, "the present state of things could not be looked on with indifference," and he exhorted the Peers on such an emergency "not to show that supineness and apathy which encourage danger."

In compliance with his recommendation a Committee fairly taken from both sides of the House was appointed to examine the papers laid before them, and their unani-

mous report,<sup>1</sup> presented after a fortnight of anxious labour, proved an abundant justification of the language of the royal message. They declared that the documents which had been produced "had left no doubt in their minds that a traitorous conspiracy had been formed for the purpose of overthrowing, by means of a general insurrection, the established Government and constitution of this country. That designs of this nature had not been confined to the capital, but had been extended and were still extending widely in many other parts of Great Britain, particularly in some of the most populous and manufacturing districts ; that societies or clubs, so numerous that it was impossible to enumerate them, were established or in process of establishment in different parts of the kingdom, in order, under pretence of Parliamentary reform, to infect the minds of all classes of the community with a spirit of discontent and disaffection, of insubordination and contempt of all law, religion, and morality, and to hold out to them the plunder and division of all property as the main object of their efforts, and the restoration of their natural rights ; that among the plans of the chief promoters of this conspiracy were included projects for the attack of all the prisons in the metropolis on a day to be agreed upon. The prisoners were to be apprised of what was in agitation, to be assured that arms would be ready for them, to be exhorted to be prepared to assume the national tricolour cockade, and to co-operate by the most violent and sanguinary measures to ensure success. Another part of the scheme contemplated an attack on the Tower and on the Bank ; while one of the chief objects of all was to take every opportunity to seduce from their allegiance the soldiers of the different regiments quartered in London. Already meetings had been held in London, at which the most inflammatory language had been held to the multi-

<sup>1</sup> In the debate on the Seditious Meetings Bill it was expressly stated by Lord Castlereagh that, though the Select Committee had consisted of men of both parties, "it was an unanimous report."

tude, while every such occurrence and every act of plunder and violence committed in the metropolis had been anticipated in the provinces before it took place. Publications of the most seditious and inflammatory nature, marked with a peculiar character of irreligion and blasphemy, and tending not only to overturn the existing form of government and order of society, but to root out those principles on which alone any Government or any society could be supported, had been openly circulated to an unprecedented extent. And the Committee concluded by expressing its decided opinion that further provisions were necessary for the preservation of the public peace, and the protection of interests in which the happiness of every class of the community was deeply and equally involved."

A Committee similarly appointed by the House of Commons fully coincided in the report made to the Lords; and, fortified by this general and authoritative recognition of the dangerous character of the crisis, the ministers decided on a temporary suspension of the law which, though in peaceful and ordinary times it is the indispensable protection of every subject, is too formal for moments of peril and emergency. They resolved to apply to Parliament to sanction the suspension of the Habeas Corpus for a limited time; and, as the effect of such stringent measures depends in a great degree on the promptitude with which they are adopted, the bill was brought in the instant that their resolution was formed, and passed through both Houses with all the expedition which the constitution would permit. Since the Home Secretary was a peer, it was thought most desirable that it should be originated in the Upper House, where, as in the House of Commons, it encountered a vehement resistance. Indeed, the unusual character of the proposal, the fact that it went to the suspension of a law than which none is more vital to the safety of every free-man, of itself supplied plausible arguments against it; and, in the hands of men as able and uncompromising as Lord Grey and Lord Holland, to whom Lord Wellesley again

united himself on this occasion, they were sure to be urged with all the effect that party spirit and popular eloquence could give them. Lord Wellesley indeed put himself in the van of the Opposition, though somewhat hampered in his reasoning by the recollection that Pitt himself, of whose policy he always professed himself a firm adherent, had had recourse to a similar step not fewer than three times, so that the point which he chiefly exerted himself to establish was the difference between the character of the time when Pitt adopted this expedient and that of the present day; for on all those occasions we were at war with France, while in the two latter instances a rebellion in Ireland was added to our foreign difficulties. He admitted that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act might be justified by necessity, but he asserted that no such case of necessity had been made out; and, declaring that the dangers to be apprehended from the outrages which had already been perpetrated, and from the seditious meetings which had taken place in London, had been greatly overrated, he contended that the ministers themselves corroborated this view of the case by their forbearance to assemble the Parliament before the usual time. The distress, and consequent discontent, which pervaded the kingdom he charged on the mismanagement of the ministers themselves, who, in the treaties of peace which had lately been concluded, had omitted to secure for Britain the unrestricted commercial intercourse with other countries and the commercial preferences to which her exertions in the common cause had entitled her. But these and other reasonings by which he justified his refusal of the powers which Lord Sidmouth demanded will be seen in the elaborate reply with which Lord Liverpool answered him, and explained and defended the whole policy of the Government.

He glanced but slightly at the question of precedent, because it was obvious that "in the history of the world no two cases of political necessity could be produced exactly alike," contenting himself with reminding the House

of what was equally unquestionable, that there were several instances of the Act in question having been suspended "when the country was menaced neither by foreign nor by internal war." The allegations of Lord Wellesley, that the existing distress had its source in any omission from the treaties of peace of stipulations favorable to our commerce which might fairly have been insisted on, he totally denied. "The real causes of that distress were differently explained. Some traced it to our paper currency; some to the great weight of our taxation. Many believed it to be the inevitable result of the sudden transition from a state of war to a state of peace; but so far, at all events, was it from being attributable to the conditions of the late treaties, that our trade and manufactures had never been so extensive as during the first two years after their conclusion; and the real causes of the present depression were partly the immense exportation which had taken place then, and the consequent present glut of the foreign markets; and still more the distress of the agricultural interest, which arose to a great extent from natural causes." To the charge which Lord Wellesley had brought against the Administration that, if the crisis were as formidable as to justify such a measure as that before the House it must be, they were bound to have assembled Parliament at an earlier period, he replied that it was but very recently that they had come to a full knowledge of the machinations of the disaffected; but they had now abundant information to justify him in asserting the existence of "a treasonable conspiracy in the metropolis to overturn by a general insurrection the laws, the government, and the constitution of the kingdom. It was also a matter of perfect notoriety that the same system was spread over a great part of the country."

With respect to the general principle he fully adopted the assertion that had been made, that the principle of the Habeas Corpus Act did not date merely from the reign of Charles II. "It was a part of the ancient law and consti-

tution of the kingdom. But the laws on which a rational Government was established might be altered or modified according to particular exigencies. There must be a power somewhere competent to the temporary suspension even of liberty, when such a measure had become necessary for its preservation. Even in the very year of the Revolution it had become necessary to suspend this same Act. He felt all the importance, all the responsibility of the measure which was now proposed. But he believed it indispensable as a support to the throne, to the constitution, to the peace and security of every individual in the kingdom, and he would not allow any imputations that might be insinuated to prevent him from discharging what he conscientiously believed to be his duty."

Of such a speech, backed up by the report of the Committees of the two Houses, all Lord Grey's efforts to neutralize the effect were vain. He was compelled indeed to admit the soundness of Lord Liverpool's doctrines as to the causes of the existing commercial distress. He was equally constrained to admit that the power of occasionally dispensing with laws such as it was now proposed to suspend was absolutely necessary to every Government. And though he thought himself bound in duty to his ally, Lord Wellesley, to coincide with him in attributing a portion of the discontent to the recent treaty of peace, the points which he selected for animadversion were not the omissions to stipulate for exclusive commercial advantages, but the articles which had sacrificed, as he contended, the rights of the Genoese and of the Lombards, and "had blotted Venice out of the map of independent nations." As to the present necessity for the adoption of such a measure as the suspension of the Act, he denied it on the ground that the alleged conspiracy (the existence of which he did not deny) was "attended with an utter improbability of success." The conspirators were "miserable wretches, sunk in the lowest poverty and distress; without any previous concert or design; and

trusting wholly to chance for the means of stimulating their instruments in the work of sedition. And the existing laws were, in his opinion, amply sufficient to repress and to punish them." But, while he thus deprecated the proposal of the ministers, he expressed a willingness to have co-operated with them in passing another measure which he indicated, in a way that marks the wide difference between his notions of government and those entertained by the Whigs of the present day, who assume to be following in his steps. "He for one would have consented to a new law for preventing meetings in the open air without a previous notice to a magistrate signed by seven respectable householders, and for preventing them from adjourning such meetings from time to time, with a sort of menace, as his noble friend<sup>1</sup> had happily expressed it, to overawe the proceedings of Parliament; or he would have consented to a measure for preventing such meetings within a certain distance of the two Houses during the sitting of Parliament." And the reason he gave for his approval of such a measure was not founded on the circumstances of the moment, but on a principle of permanent applicability. "He would have agreed to such a measure because he conceived such meetings, called by unauthorised individuals, productive of great evil, in the spirit to which they gave birth, and the riot and turbulence which they tended to produce." Such a bill, though of a temporary and of a less stringent character than the speaker indicated, was also, as he was probably aware, in preparation. But he could not persuade even his own friend, Lord Grenville, that no further precaution was necessary: that statesman on the contrary supported the ministers with the most cordial energy. He joined Lord Grey in "condemning meetings at which extensive schemes

<sup>1</sup> Lord Wellesley had spoken of the danger of public meetings, especially "if by adjournments and prorogations they were allowed to hold their sittings indefinitely, and, as it were, menace the Legislature."

of reform were submitted to individuals incapable of judging of their propriety." But he totally differed from him as to the absence of danger which Lord Grey had inferred from the abject condition of the conspirators. "He was old enough to remember the riots of 1780, when the metropolis was for four days in the hands of an infuriated mob, which at first consisted of as few persons as those collected at Spa Fields, but which was soon increased by immense numbers." He was equally positive in his denial of the adequacy of the existing laws to meet the existing crisis. "At no period in the history of the country did he believe the danger to have been greater. The seditious writers of the present day, who deluged the country and filled the air with their wicked and blasphemous productions, did not make it a question by whom the Government should be administered, but whether a Government should exist at all; whether the whole frame and constitution of the country was not so corrupt as to call, not for a mere reform of Parliament, but for such a reform as would amount to a complete revolution: and he felt it was his bounden duty to declare that some extraordinary legislative measures were absolutely necessary." A majority of four to one<sup>1</sup> coincided with him. A nearly similar proportion sanctioned the bill in the House of Commons; and the urgent necessity for the measure was shown by the fact that in June, when it was on the point of expiring, its renewal was sanctioned by a similar preponderance of assent, while its justification was found in its success. With the exception of an impotent rising in Derbyshire, which was put down by twenty soldiers in a couple of hours, it prevented any outbreak; and thus laid the foundation for the re-establishment not only of tranquillity but of confidence. In proposing its renewal Lord Liverpool was able to point to the condition of Manchester, which the disaffected had looked upon as

<sup>1</sup> The numbers were 150 *v.* 35. The continuance of the suspension was voted June 16th, by 190 *v.* 50.



one of their strongholds, as already "different from what it had been in March," and, "ascribing that happy result to this measure, he had a right to characterise it, as it had been called by others, as a measure of mercy ; a measure which every good man should hail as the safeguard of his property and freedom." It may be added that subsequent Parliaments since the passing of the Reform Bill, and even that of the present day, have fully endorsed the opinion on which he proceeded in this instance, that the additional difficulty of foreign war was not requisite to justify the policy now adopted ; since on more than one recent occasion the Habeas Corpus Act has been suspended in part of the kingdom with even more general assent than the Cabinet of 1817 could obtain. And on every such occasion the mere fact of its suspension has struck a terror into the disaffected which has saved not only the well-disposed from their outrages, but the greater part of themselves from open violation of the law, and its consequences in their condign punishment.

The success of such extraordinary legislation is undoubtedly proportioned to the degree in which it is approved and supported by the general feeling of the community. And Lord Liverpool's papers supply an instance that the measures which he and his colleagues adopted not only did not outrun, but in some points even fell short of, those which thinking men in their closets looked upon as desirable. A memorandum drawn up by the celebrated Southey, and laid before the Prime Minister, earnestly recommended still more stringent measures of repression than that he had judged desirable ; and it is the more remarkable because the writer was one who had not been at all times friendly to the constitution, but, as he confesses in it, had at one time been deeply tainted with the Jacobinical doctrines, of concession to or dalliance with which he was consequently better able than most men to appreciate the danger :

*Memorandum submitted to Lord Liverpool by Robert Southey, Esq.*

March 19th, 1817.

Feeling as I do upon the state of the country, I venture to offer for your private consideration some reflections which cannot be made public, nor need I apologise for addressing you on the subject.

The danger must be looked fairly in the face. I am of course entirely ignorant of what farther measures may be had in view for checking the course of those opinions which the press, by every imaginable means, is at this time disseminating throughout the remotest parts of England, even among these mountains; but I am certain that the great body of the manufacturing populace are not merely discontented with the Government, but absolutely abhor it with a deadly hatred, and that in the metropolis this temper is so prevalent that if the fear of the military were withdrawn, four and twenty hours would not elapse before the tricoloured flag would be planted upon Carlton House. You have passed laws to prevent men from tampering with the soldiers, but can such laws be effectual? Or are they not altogether nugatory while such manifestoes as those of Cobbett, Hone, and the *Examiner*, &c., are daily and weekly issued, fresh and fresh, and read aloud in every ale-house where the men are quartered, or where they meet together? Sir William Temple observes that when a people are generally discontented, you may as well attempt to subdue pestilence by a military force, the military being as liable to one contagion as to the other. I beseech you consider what the consequences would be if these writers, instead of abusing the soldiers, were steadily to pursue the system of flattering them, which they have more than once begun, but which they wanted temper to pursue. You must curb the press, or it will destroy the constitution of this country.

The question is, whether it be possible to keep off revolution till the moral and physical condition of the populace shall be so far improved that they will cease to desire one, feeling that they have more to lose than to gain. We must not be blind to the signs of these perilous times. The spirit of Jacobinism which influenced men in my sphere of life four and twenty years ago (myself, and men like me, among others) has dis-

appeared from that class and sunk into the rabble, who would have torn me to pieces for holding those opinions then, and would tear me to pieces for renouncing them now. Concessions can only serve to hasten the catastrophe. Woe be to the garrison who hoist a white flag to an enemy that gives no quarter.

The main thing needful is to stop the seditious press. I did hope that the first measure after the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act would have been to place the chief incendiary writers in safe custody, a measure in which the sound part of the nation would bear you out. Doubtless it is far better to imprison them in consequence of the verdict of a jury, but whilst prosecutions are going on against them, the mischief is going on also. If they are convicted, let their imprisonment be such as will prevent them from carrying on their journals. But if juries, either from fear or faction (as in Hooper's case the other day) give their verdict in the very face of facts, I beseech you do not hesitate at using that vigour beyond the law which the exigence requires, and which your own personal safety requires as much as the vital interests of the country. It is in vain to dissemble the nature of the contest. It is no struggle for place and power. "*Turni de vitâ et sanguine certant.*" Unless these men are silenced, and unless the press is diligently watched and curbed, the spirit which now exists will be kept alive, and will spread in secret after the present alarm has subsided. Upon the next season of dearth or commercial embarrassment, it will break out again, and sooner or later we shall have all the horrors of a *bellum servile*. No means can be effectual for checking the intolerable licence of the press, but that of making transportation the punishment for its abuse.

It is of infinite importance to secure the attachment of the army, not merely of the men whom you retain, but of those also whom in evil hour your poverty consents to disband. If the disbanded men should join the rioters, there is always a possibility that their former comrades might be unwilling to act against them, and there are moments in which the defection of a single company may decide the fate of a kingdom. So also with the sailors. Is it too late to give them a medal for Algiers, and even for Trafalgar? No man who wears one will ever be found in a mob against the Government which has thus distinguished him.

Another equally eminent literary man who, like Southey, had in early life been infected with the same revolutionary theories, and like him had learnt to renounce the wickedness of his associates, addressed Lord Liverpool on the same subject shortly afterwards ; and, though his letter is of a less practical, and indeed of a less intelligible,<sup>1</sup> character than that of his friend, it will be read with interest by many :

Highgate, July 28th, 1817.

MY LORD,

For the freedom I take in thus soliciting your Lordship's acceptance of the accompanying works, as I have no other motive, so have I no other excuse, but the strong feeling of respect, the inward honour, which I have been so long in the habit of connecting with your name ; unless indeed I might be permitted to add (tho'

Things of this nature scarce survive the night  
That gave them birth)

the disinterested zeal with which I have concentrated my powers, such as they are, on every important occasion in the support of those principles, and (since the Treaty of Amiens) of the measures and means which have at length secured the gratitude and reverence of the wise and good to your Lordship and your Lordship's fellow-combatants in the long agonizing contest.

In my "Literary Life," the publication of which has been delayed nearly two years, there are a few opinions which better information and more reflection would now annul. But even these will, I trust, be found only in the lesser branches, as knots and scars that may exist, without implying either canker in the root or malignant quality in the general sap of the tree.

<sup>1</sup> His correspondent was far from sure that he understood it. Lord Liverpool has endorsed it : "From Mr. Coleridge, stating that the object of his writings has been to rescue speculative philosophy from false principles of reasoning, and to place it on that basis, or give it that tendency, which would make it best suited to the interests of religion as well as of the State ; at least I believe this is Mr. Coleridge's meaning, but I cannot well understand him."

My only incurable heresy, if such it be, respects that meretricious philosophy which was first taken into open keeping by the courtiers of our second Charles ; then, shifting sides with its factious patron the Earl of Shaftesbury, and having been drilled and dressed up into matronly decorum by Mr. Locke, was led to the altar and honorably espoused to Low Church Protestantism : his former good old handmaid having been repudiated for supposed infidelities with pagans and Papists. But what is bred in the bone, the proverb tells us, will break out in the flesh, and it did not require the subtlety of Hume's logic to demonstrate that no cement can keep together pious conclusions and atheistic premises. After bestowing a few of her favours on the semi-Christians at home, the Magdalen eloped to the anti-Christians of the Continent, the Pallas αἰγίοχος of the encyclopædists and the Jacobins' Goddess of Reason.

I am fully aware, my Lord, that scarcely one in ten thousand is sufficiently interested in the first problems of speculative science to give himself any concern about the truth or falsehood of the solutions, or even to understand the terms in which they are enunciated. What matters it to the world, it will be said ; of what consequence can it be to society at large, that the physiology alone taught or tolerated in the present day sets out with a pure fiction, an ultimate particle to wit? that it proceeds with a blank miracle, *i.e.* the causeless and therefore preternatural hardness or infrangibility of these elementary corpuscles, with an apotheosis of death, by virtue of which the insensate motes are elevated into demiurgic atoms, indivisible and yet space-comprehending minims, that are at once the stuff, the tools, and the workmen of the material universe ; and that it concludes with subtle fluids, each thinner than the other, in order to explain (*i.e.* making pictures of) the acts and properties of the miraculous solids, which in their turn, however, recur by a fresh diminuendo, as the constituents and explainers of these all-explaining fluids? What are mankind the worse, that the sole orthodox systems of physics and metaphysics, out of the pale of which there is no salvation for reason or common sense . . . what matters it that this system, assuming, not matter (ἡ γὰρ καὶ ὕλη ἀσώματος) but *body* as a *semper jam datum, euphoniae causâ creatum*, the mysterious

Melchisedek of the atomistic faith, without father, without mother, without descent (or pedigree), having neither beginning of days, nor end, does by a strange contradiction confound the distinction, while it at once affirms and destroys the identity or co-inherence of form and substance, and in every instance superinduces, or tries hard to superinduce, the first on the second *ab extra*, resolving all quality into accidents of quantity, as if the substrates were ready-made cushions, in which the properties were stuck, pins in one, needles in another, and brooches in a third? But what is all this to the world at large? To an objection so plausible and so obvious, I must have remained silent, my Lord, if the history of all civilized nations in all ages had not supplied the decisive answer; if the recorded experience of mankind had not attested the important fact, that the taste and character, the whole tone of manners and feeling, and above all the religious (at least the theological) and the political tendencies of the public mind, have ever borne such a close correspondence, so distinct and evident an analogy to the predominant system of speculative philosophy, whatever it has chanced to be, as must remain inexplicable, unless we admit not only a reaction and interdependence on both sides, but a powerful though most often indirect influence of the last on all the former. The reliefless surfaces, imprisoned in their wiry outlines, as so many definitions personified of the Church artists during the ascendancy of the schoolmen; the coincidence of the revival of Platonism by Dante and Petrarch, with the appearance of Giotto, and the six other strong masters preserved, in part, in the Cemetery at Pisa, and the culmination of the "divine philosophy" with Michael Angelo, Raffael, Titian, and Correggio; the rise and reign of the eclectic school, characterised by a nominal, national, idealess dogmatism, with the Caracci, and the Academic painters, the usurpation of the name of painters and statuaries by the layers-on of inveterate likenesses, and the marble periwig-makers under the common-sense philosophy, and lastly, the marked predilection of Sir J. Reynolds for a species of semi-Platonism, originating in the impressions made on his mind in early youth by a Platonist; these are but the ribs, abutments, and sea-marks of a long line of correspondences

in the arts of taste to the opposite coast of speculative philosophy. Yet even in these the coincidence is far too regular to be resolved into mere accident.

On religion, which is at all times the centre of gravity in the machine, and with and through which philosophy acts on the community in general, the influence is still more manifest. I have laboured to draw the attention of the clergy to the plain fact, and to scatter the dreams of a sycophantic philanthropy, respecting the morals of our labouring classes, in my "Lay Sermons," and somewhat more at large in the third volume of the "Friend," now printing. What indeed but the wages of death can be expected from a doctrine which degrades the Deity into a blank hypothesis, and that the hypothesis of a clockwork-maker, say rather the hypoporesis or suffretion, fairly open to Darwin's sarcasm (the fifteenth part of the atmosphere disappears we know not how : *therefore*, there is a green dragon at the North Pole) : a godless nature, and a natureless abstract God, now an extramundane Homo Magnus, from whom the world had its being, the Allah of a Mahometan Monoidolism, and now the Sunday (or red-letter) name of gravitation, whereon the pater omnipotens æther is not employed instead. One good thing, however, we owe to this æther ; it detects the hollowness of the usual excuse pretended by the doctors of the corpuscular theory, that their attraction and repulsion are but fictions in a *memoria technica*, meant to connect, not explain, the phænomena of which they are the generic exponents. With the truly great Kepler's centripetal and centrifugal agencies, this is really the cause ; the terms simply generalize the facts. But the very terms substituted, and chosen in preference, imply causative agency ; and I will hazard the assertion, that there is not a single chapter in the works of any modern theorist, a disciple of Locke, Hartley, or Condillac, that will not be found to contain positions utterly subversive of this pretence. If anything could have recalled the physics and physiology of the age to the dynamic theory of the eldest philosophy, it must have been the late successful researches of the chemists, which almost force on the very senses the facts of mutual penetration and intus-susception, which have supplied a series of experimental proofs

that in all pure phenomena we behold only the copula, the balance, or indifference, of opposite energies. The recent relapse, therefore, of our chemists to the atomistic scheme, and the almost unanimous acceptance of Dalton's theory in England and Le Sage's in France, determine the intellectual character and tendencies of the age with the force of an *experimentum crucis*.

I reverence the sublime and prosperous application of the higher geometry to the investigation of the world, as far as the nature of masses is revealed by quantity, and thus, as it were, self-submitted to the processes of scientific calculus. But let it not be forgotten that this is a scyon, the one healthy and prosperous graft from the Platonic tree. I appreciate at their true value the useful inventions and brilliant discoveries of the modern chemistry from Stahl to Davy, but I dare not overlook that they were made during the suspension of the mechanic philosophy relatively to chemical theory; and I know that, since the year 1798, every experiment of importance had been distinctly preannounced by the founders or restorers of the constructive or dynamic doctrine in the only country in which a man can exercise his understanding in the light of his reason without being supposed to be out of his senses; and I persist in the belief (Appendix to the first Lay Sermon, p. xvii.) that "a few brilliant inventions have been dearly purchased at the loss of all communion with life and the spirit of nature."

Most significantly, my Lord, did the ancients (Greek and Oriental) name the great object of physiology the genesis, the *φύσις*, the *natura rerum*, i.e. the birth of things. They searched after and recorded the acts of the world, and the self-subsistence yet inter-dependence, the difference yet identity, of the forms they expressed by the symbol of begetting. With the moderns, on the contrary, nothing ever grows, all is made. Growth itself is but a disguised mode of being made by the superinduction of *jam data* on a *jam datum*. This habit of thinking permeates the whole mass of our principles, and it is in spite of ourselves that we are not like a horde of Americans, a people without a history, for the historic feeling is evanescent, even in the construction of history itself. Can it be then the result of accident that the political dogmata, the principles of which are



notoriously affirmed and supported in the writings of Locke, that "the perilous stuff" that still weighs on the heart of Europe, and from which all the dire antidotes of the late Revolution have not yet "cleansed the foul bosom;" is it but a sport of chance that these need only borrow a few terms from the mechanic philosophy to become a fac-simile of its doctrines? The independent atoms of the state of nature cluster round a common centre, and make a convention; that convention makes a constitution of Government; then the makers and the made make a contract, which ensures to the former the right of breaking it whenever it shall seem good to them, and assigns to the governed an indefeasible right of sovereignty over their governors, which being withstood, this one-sided compact is dissolved, the compact falls abroad into the independent atoms aforesaid, which are then to dance the Hayés till a new constitution is made by them. For, as Mr. Locke and Major Cartwright sagaciously observe, an atom is an atom, neither more nor less, and by the pure attribute of his atom has an equal claim with every other atom to be constituent and demiurgic on all occasions. But, as they are of diverse figures, they are rather apt to clash, in which case the majority must either keep under, or expel the minority, and the system ends as it began, in "physical force," as the sovereign people are sure to learn, where the minority happens to consist of a ruffian at the head of an army of ruffians. Can it be mere accident, too, that this precious scheme was first drawn into experiment, and, as far as it was absurdly permitted, first realized by the very nation among whom our modern philosophy enjoyed the most exclusive dominion, by the people that of all the nations of Europe were most characterised by the divulsion and insulation of the sensual present, by the ignorance and contempt of all that connects it with the past, and the wanton assaults on all the principles and feelings which constitute its most effective relations to the future?

It is high time, my Lord, that the subjects of Christian Governments should be taught that neither historically or morally, in fact or by right, have men made the State; but that the State, and that alone, makes them men: a truth that can be opposed by those only who confound the State with the few individuals

who have taken on themselves the troublesome and thankless duty of guarding it against any practical exhibitions of their new state-craft ; that the name of country is but a sound if it be not true ; that the flux of individuals in any one moment of existence is there for the sake of the State, far more than the State for them, though both positions are true proportionally ; that the *jus divinum* of the supreme magistracy is a tenet that has been discredited only by a gross perversion of its sense ; lastly, that states and kingdoms grow, and are not to be made ; and that in all political revolutions, whether for the weal or chastisement of a nation, the people are but the sprigs and boughs in a forest, tossed against each other, or moved all in the same direction, by an agency in which their own will has the least share. As long as the principles of our gentry and clergy are grounded in a false philosophy, which retains but the name of logic, and has succeeded in rendering metaphysics a term of opprobrium, all the Sunday and national schools in the world will not preclude schism and Jacobinism in the middle and lower classes. The predominant philosophy is the keynote, and we may apply to it, *a fortiori*, Plato's profound remark on the music of a nation : εἶδος γὰρ καινὸν μουσικῆς μεταβαλλεῖν εὐλαβητέον ὥς ἐν ὅλῳ κινδυνεύοντα. οὐδαμοῦ γὰρ κινουῦνται μουσικῆς τρόποι ἀνεὺ (τρόπων) πολιτικῶν νόμων τῶν μεγίστων.

In all revolutions (and even our own in 1688, mild as was its process, and beneficent as the results were, is yet no full exception) the contending parties divide the truth and the falsehood, and the victors consecrate, and too often legalize, their share of the heterogeneous compound. Thus, instead of good to evil, a state of things arises which requires, and in some way or other will bring about, a fresh separation. The fan is still in the hand : God grant that, under the wise and temperate measures of your Lordship, and your Lordship's coadjutors in the British Cabinet, the necessary process may be carried on in meekness, and by individual collisions, and that France may have sufficed for the vengeance of an outraged Providence.

Such is the object which I have long proposed to myself, these the grounds on which I claim the patronage and protection of as many as entertain similar convictions with myself, and

believe me qualified to enforce them. From the so-called public I can scarcely wish for anything but neglect ; from its literary and political guides I expect, and have experienced, nothing but inveterate and pre-determined malignity. It is Pliny's advice that a writer should aim to please *vel omnibus vel paucis*. I have chosen the latter, and in this hope have ventured to address your Lordship as, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

The Opposition, or rather Lord Holland, did not limit his attacks on the Government to objections to its domestic policy, but assailed it with even more vehemence on its treatment of Buonaparte, which he characterised as harsh and ungenerous, comparing it, with singular absurdity, to Elizabeth's behaviour to Mary Queen of Scots. Mary was a princess of the blood royal of England ; it was not even pretended that she had ever engaged in hostility against England, and she was put to death. Napoleon was a foreign foe, unwearied in his proclamation of eternal hatred to this country, one who had waged war against it with the bitterness of personal animosity for many years ; one who had shown that no treaties could bind him ; and he was maintained in what Lamartine has happily entitled "a respectful captivity," which in fact was comparative freedom ; was allowed the society of several of his chosen personal friends ; and was provided with an establishment more sumptuous than is allowed to the governors of our most important colonies. Indeed, Lord Holland, when descending from his comparison, which was rather a contrast, could find no more serious grievances on which to ground his complaint than that some restrictions had been placed on his correspondence, and on the books, newspapers, and other publications which he was permitted to receive ; alleging particularly that to prevent him from writing to the Prince Regent was an infringement also of the prerogative of our own sovereign ; that the hours during which he was allowed to ramble over the island were also limited ;

that the air of that part of St. Helena on which the house allotted to him was situated was damp, and the house inconvenient; that he was not so amply provided with everything which he could possibly require but that he had spent, or had proposed to spend, some of his own money; and, finally, that some of his generals and courtiers, who had families, could not procure religious instruction for their children because there was no clergyman of their persuasion in the island. Some of these arrangements, the control of his movements, the supervision of his correspondence, were manifestly indispensable for his secure detention: and newspapers were placed on the same footing as letters, because attempts had been made by his partisans in Europe to use them as such. Some restrictions, not originally adopted, had been forced upon the Government by the conduct of Napoleon himself; as when the extent of ground over which he might ride or walk unaccompanied by a British officer had been reduced from twelve miles to eight, because he had been found "to abuse the confidence reposed in him by endeavouring to tamper with the inhabitants." As to his house, it was not that which had been originally intended for him; but he had taken such a fancy to it that our own Lieutenant-Governor with his family had been turned out of it in order to accommodate him. Other statements made by the French officers, on which Lord Holland had founded some of his complaints, Lord Bathurst proved to be absolute falsehoods. The truth was that Lord Holland, as he avowed, was opposed to the detention of Napoleon altogether. But he could not find a single supporter; and how little ground there was for the assertion that the prisoner's health and spirits were giving way under the rigour of his confinement may be seen in the following letter, which was written by Sir Thomas Reade, then serving with his regiment at St. Helena, the very same week that Lord Holland claimed the interference of Parliament in his behalf:

St. Helena, March 16th, 1817.

MY LORD,

An opportunity for England offering so soon after the arrival in this island of the book lately published by Dr. Warden, of his Majesty's ship *Northumberland*, I cannot let it pass without informing your Lordship of the manner in which General Buonaparte expressed himself regarding its contents, immediately after he had perused it.

He said that he was very much surprised how Dr. Warden could have presumed to write in the manner he had done ; that *three-fourths of the book were not true* ; that any person who had the slightest knowledge of him must know that it was not his style of conversation : and he proceeded to make some remarks upon particular passages in it. He said that if it should ever be published in France, any person reading that part relative to the battle of Essling which says "that the village of Essling was defended by Marshal Masséna in so obstinate a manner as to repel fourteen different attacks which had been made upon it," must immediately find out that it was false, as all France knew that Masséna was never near the village during the action, but was stationed with the left wing of the French army, and of which he had the command, and the village happened to be on the right. This alone was sufficient to condemn the remainder of the book in the eye of every Frenchman.

He also remarked that it convinced him that Count Las Cases must be a bad interpreter, as half what Dr. Warden had been pleased to make him say had never been spoken by him.

Your Lordship will remark upon reading the book, that it would appear most of the conversations were absolutely held between General Buonaparte and Dr. Warden, and it so happens that the Dr. does not speak one word of French, nor can General Buonaparte speak English : upon every occasion of their interviews Count Las Cases was the interpreter. He finished his remarks upon it in a very strong and forcible manner, peculiar to himself, with saying that there were in the book "*cento coglionieri e cento Buggei*."

My own opinion is, that General Buonaparte, through Count Las Cases, expressed a hope to Dr. Warden that some person

would make public the four following cases: viz. the death of Captain Wright, 'the murder of the Duke d'Enghien, the poisoning the sick in Egypt, and the shooting the Turkish prisoners, all which Dr. Warden seems to have taken great pains to note clearly, and no doubt in the same manner in which they were related to him.

The Bertrands and General Gourgaud are very much annoyed also with the book. The greater part of the conversation which Dr. Warden says he had with Count Bertrand is positively denied by the latter.

Nothing very extraordinary has taken place at Longwood since the last accounts were sent home. General Buonaparte still confines himself in great measure to his house, but continues to enjoy good health. Sir Pulteney Malcolm lately visited him, and had a long conversation regarding the differences which exist between himself and the Governor; and I believe he begins to show symptoms of a desire to be again on good terms with Sir Hudson Lowe, who, upon every occasion, has shown an earnest and sincere desire to pay every attention, consistent with his duty, to General Buonaparte and his suite, for which I am sorry to say he has hitherto received a very bad return. I fear, my Lord, that all the differences which have arisen between General Buonaparte and Sir Hudson Lowe have originated in a great measure through the insidious and artful conduct of Count Las Cases, who I really believe is one of the most dangerous characters in existence; his abilities are of a very superior class, and his wicked and designing intentions I much fear keep pace with them. I trust, however, that his removal from this island, together with the admiral's last visit, may be productive of some good effect.

Sir George and Lady Bingham visited General Buonaparte yesterday, and found him in the highest spirits. The conversation however did not prove very interesting; he asked Lady Bingham several silly questions, such as, "What was the name of the nearest town to her father's home? whether she had ever been in London?" and a few others of the same kind. The visit was but of short duration.

Mr. Balcomb's family have likewise seen him lately. His conversation with them was also trifling; he asked the youngest

Miss Balcomb, who had just recovered from a dangerous illness, where she expected to have gone to if she had died? She answered, she hoped to heaven; he replied, "They would have soon tired of you there, and turned you out."

Should anything again soon occur worthy of communication, I shall take the liberty of writing it.

I have the honour to remain,

My Lord, your Lordship's most faithful,  
obedient, and obliged servant,

T. READE.

Meanwhile the country which Napoleon had ruled so long, and reduced to such misery, now that all apprehension of his return was removed, was regaining its former and natural prosperity. Mr. Alexander Baring, in transmitting to Lord Liverpool an account of the extensive financial engagements into which he was entering with the French King's ministers, affirms that "in general, public credit throughout the country is decidedly improved and improving, and, although a plant that requires to be treated tenderly, was likely, he believed, to be found adequate to a reasonable settlement of the heavy claims which it was required to support, burthens at which, but a year ago, he had been looking almost with despair." And Lord Liverpool's answer shows how sincere were the wishes of himself and his colleagues for the welfare of France, how genuine their desire to comply with her well-known wishes, and to make every concession to her pride which could be granted with safety; since the conclusion which he deduces from the great money-dealer's favorable report is, that in all probability Britain and the allies may feel themselves justified in abridging the term originally fixed for the occupation of the country by the Duke of Wellington's army.

In the course of the session more than one attack was made on the policy adopted by the Cabinet in dealing with the disaffected, with those whose acts had notoriously brought them within the grasp of the law, as well as with those who were only suspected of participation in their misconduct;

but the arguments used on each side were little more than a repetition of those employed in the discussions on the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act; and the only question of real importance which came before the House of Lords in the latter part of the session was brought under its notice by Lord Liverpool himself. In the beginning of the year more than one of his influential supporters, Lord Kenyon, Sir John Wrottesley, and others, had pressed upon him different measures for the relief of the distress, chiefly in the form of finding work, either of a temporary or permanent nature, for the able-bodied poor. Lord Liverpool wisely preferred a more comprehensive measure, which should place, if possible, the whole system under which relief was afforded to the poor on an improved footing; and in a brief but clear speech, in which he pointed out how far an unanimous condemnation of an existing system often was from producing any unanimity as to the remedies to be applied, and that, in such a case as the poor-law, the cure for its admitted evils was the more difficult to decide on because those evils were of long standing, and had become intermixed with the habits and prejudices of the people, he recommended that the Lords should appoint a Committee to investigate the whole subject in all its bearings. Such a motion, made by the Prime Minister, was in itself a pledge for the removal of the most important defects in the existing law; and the investigations of the Committee thus moved for, with those of a similar Committee appointed by the House of Commons, supplied the ministers with a body of information which enabled them in the following year to begin a series of amendments in the existing law not the less efficacious for the cautious moderation which marked every step that was taken.

A couple of letters from Lord Hastings, the second of which was received by Lord Liverpool in the course of this year, are interesting from their bearing on the Governor-General's great achievement, the subjugation of



the Pindarrees ; and also as explaining the views of a practical statesman of great ability on the details, and to some extent on the principles, of our government in India. One prediction on which the writer ventures, that the post which he was occupying would probably never be filled again by a servant of the Company, has indeed been apparently falsified in our day by the appointment of Sir John Lawrence ; but the circumstances of the case are completely altered by the abolition of the authority of the Company itself ; and in other respects the views which Lord Hastings expresses seem eminently sagacious and practical :

*Private.*

Calcutta, June 1st, 1816.

MY DEAR LORD,

In the sense of a public and very material inconvenience, I am now suffering the penalty of a false delicacy. When I quitted England, the view had opened itself to me that the same considerations which induced my being sent out at all, made it highly expedient for me to have a sort of general control over the King's Governments east of the Cape of Good Hope. The unworthy apprehension of seeming to grasp at power, or of wishing to make my own situation more distinguished, prevented my speaking to you on the subject, and I am now reproaching myself for having given way to that paltry fear.

Lieut.-General Abercromby has despatched to me a letter from Lieut.-General Brownrigg, in which the latter solicits the instant aid of five thousand men, in order that by taking advantage of a rebellion against the King of Kandy, and of an invitation from the officer commanding the most important province of the island, he may put an end to these hostilities which have for so many years rendered the possession of the island unprofitable. Lieut.-General Abercromby has prepared the troops, and only waits my sanction for their embarkation. I have given that sanction, though most reluctantly, and with the feeling that I do it blind-folded. The unfurnishing ourselves of such a body of troops when impending questions respecting the Pindarrees may very readily lead to differences with Scindiah and Holkar, is exceedingly objectionable. But,

should we have no immediate want of such a force for our own purposes, the expense of the expedition will be a very serious pressure on a labouring treasury. On the other hand doubtful as I am whether the opening be such as Lieut. General Brownrigg rates it, I do not like on mere presumption to withhold an assistance which an officer in his station represents as of signal importance to the King's service. Still it would have been satisfactory to me, and advantageous to the State, that I should have been in a capacity to judge for myself in such a matter. With this feeling, I should consciously neglect the public interest were I to forbear submitting to your Lordship the expediency of vesting in the person who may hold this Government after me a superintendence over the islands in the Eastern seas. With the patronage of the islands he should have no concern; but the several Governments ought to be bound to recur to him in all cases out of ordinary course, where the length of time requisite for reference to England would be obviously irreconcilable to the pressing nature of the occurrence. I request that no powers of this sort may be sent to me; as the thing has gone on so long, with whatever inconvenience, on its present footing, it may last out in the same way for the residue of my term; but I do strongly urge it on your Lordship's consideration for my successor. It is highly improbable that the appointment of Governor-General of India should ever again be granted to a Company's servant; I am satisfied that it never ought to be. You would probably, therefore, select a person of such rank as would make it natural to attach to his situation the further power of overlooking the King's Governments in the Indian seas. In very many instances, beyond such a case as that which has led me to write, the inspection would be most wholesome. Therefore I confidently offer the suggestion.

I have the honour, my dear Lord, to remain, with high esteem,

Your Lordship's faithful and obedient servant,

MOIRA.

*Private.*

Calcutta, June 2d, 1817.

MY DEAR LORD,

This letter is meant as a sort of duplicate to one in which I endeavoured to express my sense of that kindness on your

part, which must have encouraged the bounty of the Prince, in the distinction which he has lately deigned to bestow upon me. Lest that letter should fail, allow me to renew my assurances of obligation to you. I knew the inexhaustible generosity of the Prince's friendship where he condescended to entertain a partiality, but I knew also that elevated constitutional British spirit in him which would not indulge his private prepossessions were they not sanctioned by the opinion of his ministers. I must thence comprehend what I owe to your Lordship, and it is gratifying to me to feel the debt turned towards you. Intermediate occurrences will not, I trust, have altered your sentiments. Where I have been at liberty to act, openings have been seized advantageously for the Company, and I venture to assert that, in whatsoever degree the sway or the influence of the Company is extended, it is so much gained for the general interests of humanity. A special interdict restrained me from undertaking the extirpation of the Pindarrees if the attempt could involve the hazard of a breach with Scindiah : a hazard so inseparable from the attempt that the inhibition was not conditional, but positive. My own sense of the ruinous consequences of that forbearance would have made me set aside these instructions as inapplicable, could I have obtained the unanimous declaration of my Council to that position. Without such a record to bear me out, your Lordship must feel that it would have been incorrect in me to proceed in contravention of an order, not simply peremptory, but repeated after the exposition of my opinions had been received. My Council at last bore testimony to the absolute necessity of extinguishing the Pindarrees ; but it was not till at so late a period that, before I could have brought the corps forward to their points, a season ruinous to the health of troops must have commenced. With painful reluctance, therefore, I have been constrained to postpone the undertaking till the middle of September. In the mean time, no measure expediently conducive to the ultimate object has been omitted. Frank but conciliatory intimation was given to Scindiah, that the Pindarrees must be extirpated ; that co-operation towards that object would entitle the Power so acting to boons from me ; that support to the Pindarrees, either open or covert,

would subject any state to share their fate without distinction. Scindiah had seen a show of force with which he felt he could not cope in steady contest ; but he had received a further lesson. I am persuaded that the Mahrattas have encouraged the enterprises of the Pindarrees against the British provinces, in order to put to the test a notion they had conceived that a predatory war might be advantageously maintained against the English by lightly equipped cavalry, while the fortresses of the assailing state would secure it against subjugation in the interval. The inflictions suffered by the Pindarrees in their expeditions shook the conception entertained, that bodies composed solely of horse might evade being grasped ; and the reduction of the strongest fortress in India (Haltrass) in fifteen hours after the batteries opened dissolved all confidence in strongholds. Scindiah therefore agreed (I believe honestly) to join in expelling the Pindarrees for ever. His mind had never inferred that the advance of reinforcements to the divisions north of the Godavery had other purpose than eventual operations against the Pindarrees, and I have reason to think he did not attentively notice the amount of the troops so brought forward. He did not then suspect that we were aware of the Peishwa's machinations with all the Mahratta states ; undecided how he might ultimately see cause to act, he kept the Peishwa in play with protestations which, when he came to measure the force overhanging him, he found could never be realized. Holkar perforce follows his policy. They have thence left in the lurch the Peishwa, who would never have stood out in the manner he has done but for confidence in their support. I think it possible you may imagine us to be too vigorous with the Peishwa, but remember that we see the whole of the game. I had done all that was practicable to win him back, by pretending not to see the extent of his perfidy, and by holding forth personal pledge of kindness between us. This was ineffectual. He plighted me asseverations of amity, and revived all his profligate negotiations. There was consequently nothing left but to subdue him. This has been done without a war, through the timely provision which had been made for such an exigency. It is as well that he should remain on the musnud as that we should seat another

there ; for, as there is never anything which will keep these people true to their engagements but a dread of our strength, he who has experienced it will be more likely to be careful than another as to observances. Some appendages of the Peishwa's sway, capable of being used inconveniently for us, must be taken from him. When the conditions for his submission were tendered to him, he was told by my desire that his acceptance of them only secured him from removal from the musnud, because I was determined to punish his breach of faith by a defalcation from his power. To those inflictions he must subscribe patiently, and the lesson will be excellent for others. The expense will have been less than you would expect, for I have established a different rate for military operations than used to obtain in India. I do not at all look to heavy charges in what is before us ; but, were expenditure on a very large scale requisite, I beg your Lordship to understand that we have plenty of money here for any amount of demand.

I have the honour, my dear Lord, to be,

With high regard and esteem,

Your Lordship's faithful and obliged servant,

HASTINGS.

It does not belong to a work like the present to relate with what energy and success Lord Hastings executed his plans against those restless and formidable freebooters, amply requiting by his service the honours which seemed to have been conferred on him by anticipation.<sup>1</sup> It is sufficient to say here, that in a vigorous administration of more than usual duration, for he did not return to England till 1823, Lord Hastings finally and entirely broke up the whole power of the freebooting tribes, Mahrattas as well as Pindarrees, who had so long disquieted all India, and who had recently increased so greatly in audacity, that even while he was meditating their subjugation they ventured on beginning hostilities, and attacked the British residency at Poonah. One victory, that of Mehidpoor, in which Sir John Malcolm routed Holkar, the son of the Duke of

<sup>1</sup> He had been created Marquis of Hastings in December 1816.

Wellington's old antagonist, is entitled to be classed among the most brilliant achievements of our Indian army. And before he had laid down his authority, Lord Hastings had fairly earned the praise of having greatly contributed to the consolidation of the Imperial authority of Britain throughout the whole of Central India, and of having greatly augmented the resources of the country for future prosperity by the establishment of tranquillity and security in provinces which had previously been strangers to such blessings.

The letters which follow can hardly even now be read without a feeling of melancholy interest. The Princess Charlotte and her husband, as far as can be judged from the short time that their union was permitted to last, seem to have had the same sort of preference for quiet domestic happiness over the splendid excitement of a Court life that afterwards distinguished the royal pair who succeeded to the position which they had expected to fill. Since their marriage they had been living at Claremont in tranquil seclusion, and the Princess was expecting to become a mother in the autumn. The whole nation was looking forward to the event which was to crown her felicity with eager expectation ; for, independently of the political interest inseparable from the birth of one who, if a Prince, would become the heir to the throne, she was greatly beloved by all classes, and it scarcely seemed to enter into the mind of any one that their anticipations might not be realized. The first letter shows how little room such an apprehension found in the mind of Prince Leopold himself, as his sole anxiety was to arrange the christening of the infant, and Lord Liverpool was compelled to explain to him that the plan which he proposed was neither conformable to ordinary practice nor to the feelings of the people.

Claremont, ce 21 d'octobre, 1817.

MY LORD !

Je prends la liberté de vous communiquer en peu de lignes la résolution que nous avons prise relativement au "baptisum,"

et les raisons qui nous y avons déterminé. Les extraits baptisains que les évêques vous ont communiqué montrent que presque tous les membres vivans de la famille Royale ont été christened at once, sans être ondoyé avant cela, et que le christening s'est fait à peu près un mois après leur naissance. Notre situation cependant me paraît différente de la leur, nous vivons isolé à la campagne ; et si l'enfant devait soudain devenir malade, qui est-ce qui le baptiserait ? Nous n'avons personne que notre vieux curé d'Esher qui pourrait le faire, et je ne sais pas si cela serait tout à fait convenable. Tandis qu'après la naissance de l'enfant nous aurons l'archevêque sur les lieux. Outre cela je ne vois point d'objection à faire à cet acte puisqu'il n'y a rien puisse s'y opposer la cérémonie du christening, toujours avoir lieu, et on a l'avantage que cela puisse moins qui si l'enfant m'avait pas été ondoyé. La santé de Charlotte est, Dieu merci, très-bonne, et il paraît que nous aurons encore quelques jours à attendre l'événement. Elle me charge de bien des complimens pour Lady Liverpool, et pour vous, auxquels je joins les miens, ainsi que l'assurance de ma considération la plus vraie avec laquelle.

Je suis, my Lord,

Votre très dévoué servit,

LEOPOLD.

Walmer Castle, October 23d, 1817.

SIR,

I have this moment had the honour of receiving your Serene Highness's letter. May I request of your Serene Highness and of Princess Charlotte to reconsider the determination you appear to have taken upon the subject of the baptism ?

I think your Serene Highness appears to have misapprehended the opinion of the Archbishop of Canterbury and of the Bishop of London on this point.

Their objection did not rest exclusively, or even principally, upon precedent, but upon the immediate ceremony being (except in certain cases) contrary to the rubric.

They were naturally led to look into the precedents of royal baptisms, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the practice in cases of the royal family had, in point of fact, varied from

that which was observed in other cases. They found, however, that the practice in royal baptisms was the same, and had been quite conformable to the rubric. They could not, therefore, recommend a departure from it in the approaching instance.

I do not conceive that it can be of any consequence whether the christening takes place at the end of one month or of two, if more convenient. The objection is to the half ceremony taking place except in the case of sickness.

The Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of London will both attend at Claremont on the occasion of Princess Charlotte's confinement: I would humbly recommend to your Serene Highness to be governed by what may be at the time their opinion on this point.

I can have no motive in giving your Serene Highness any advice on this subject, except my anxiety for your doing what may be generally thought to be right, and a strong feeling that the public in this country are more sensitive upon everything connected with religion than on any other matter.

I am most truly happy to hear from your Serene Highness so favorable an account of her Royal Highness Princess Charlotte's health. May I request of you to present my humble duty to her, as well as that of Lady Liverpool, who, I am rejoiced to say, has been tolerably well in health since she has been at this place? She desires me to return her sincere thanks to your Serene Highness for your kind inquiries after her.

I am, with the greatest respect, Sir,

Your Serene Highness's most obedient, humble servant,

LIVERPOOL.

Lord Liverpool himself was not present at Claremont when the sad event took place,<sup>1</sup> but the first portion of the

<sup>1</sup> The intelligence of his loss was communicated to the Regent by Lord Bathurst, and the following letter gives an account of the interview :

“ Downing Street, November 6th,

“ 8.30 A.M.

“ MY DEAR LIVERPOOL,

“ The Prince Regent arrived at Carlton House a little before four o'clock this morning, setting off as soon as he received the account that Dr. Sims had been sent for. He had missed the two



following letter shows how painfully it affected him, both on public and private grounds. While fully sympathising with those whom ties of blood bound to the deceased Princess, as a statesman he was at least equally impressed with the political perplexities which might arise from her loss, since at that time not only had none of all George III.'s sons any legitimate family, but the Duke of Gloucester, their cousin, was equally childless, and it seemed not impossible that it might once more become necessary to seek for the heir to the British crown from among the foreign princes who could claim a descent from the House of Stuart.

*Private.*

Wife House, November 10th, 1817.

MY DEAR PEEL,

You would certainly have heard from me at once on the subject of your letter of the 31st ult., if the severe calamity which we have all sustained had not for a time prevented me from thinking of anything which was not immediately connected with it. I have no doubt that this sad event will produce as deep an impression amongst the loyal and well disposed in Ireland as it has done amongst all classes of people in this country: indeed, there never was an occurrence more calculated to excite every feeling, private and public. I never knew an individual in his station more respected than Prince Leopold, and it is painful to reflect on the change which he

last messengers. On finding that the Regent had arrived, I went with the Duke of York to Carlton House a little before seven, and having waked Sir Benjamin Blomfield, we desired his Royal Highness should be immediately waked, and informed that we were waiting. On going up he asked most anxiously how things were going on. I told him at once that her Royal Highness had been seized in an alarming manner at half-past twelve at night; and, after a short pause, added that it was over at half-past two. He struck his two hands on his forehead, and bowed down, without saying a word, for a minute. He then held out his hand to me, and calling his brother, threw himself into his arms. He has really behaved in a most becoming manner. By his order I am going down immediately with the Duke of York to Claremont with all offers of every kind to the Prince of Coburg.

"Yours ever,

"BATHURST."

experienced in all his prospects, in the course of a few sad hours.

The public consequences of this event must become a subject of the greatest anxiety. If it had pleased God to have spared either the mother or the child, we should have had something on which to have fixed our hopes and expectations; but as it is we are thrown quite out to sea, and there is no expedient to which we can look with real satisfaction.

Upon the subject of the military estimates for the ensuing year, we must certainly persevere in the same system which has been adopted for the last two years, of making every practical reduction. With respect to the force in Great Britain, it was reduced last year to 26,000 men, including reliefs to our garrisons abroad; and it was then avowed that as far as regarded Great Britain there was no probability of its being possible to reduce our peace establishment below the number then stated. Indeed, if the internal state of the country had not materially improved, it would have been impracticable to have carried on the various military duties without some augmentation of force. As it is, we may safely rest upon our establishment of 26,000 men.

I have for some time entertained a hope that you might in time be enabled to reduce the peace establishment of Ireland to about 18,000, but whether this can be effected in the present year I must leave to you to consider.

I am extremely vexed at the inconsiderate proceedings respecting the House and Window Tax, which could hardly fail to be productive in a greater or less degree of the inconvenience which has actually arisen. I will certainly give an intimation in the proper quarter of the importance of great caution in matters of this sort, more especially in those which have reference to a country so situated as Ireland.

I enclose a letter which I have received from Pole. I do not think it necessary to trouble the Lord Lieutenant upon it, but I shall be much obliged to you if you will lay it before him, and tell him that I have no wish in the event to which it refers but that he should do what is right, and consider the appointment in question together with those of others.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

Another matter which required some delicacy of management was the question through what channel information of the calamity which had befallen her should be conveyed to the Princess of Wales. The difficulties, and the manner in which he settled them, Lord Liverpool explained to Sir Robert Gardiner, Prince Leopold's equerry.

Fife House, 7th November, 1817.

MY DEAR SIR,

I quitted Walmer Castle yesterday evening as soon as I received the melancholy account of what had occurred at Claremont, and I reached London at six o'clock this morning.

I should esteem it a particular favour if you will take a proper opportunity of expressing to Prince Leopold how deeply both Lady Liverpool and I have been afflicted at the dreadful loss he has sustained, and how sincerely we lament it as one of the greatest private and public calamities with which Providence could have visited us.

Upon communication with the Lord Chancellor, Lord Sidmouth, Lord Bathurst, and Mr. Vansittart, I am desired to acquaint you that we are all strongly impressed with the embarrassment which exists, as to the mode of making any communication to the Princess of Wales upon this melancholy occasion.

The Prince Regent would certainly object to any official communication being made to her Royal Highness, and even independent of this consideration some inconvenience might arise after all that has passed, in renewing any channel of communication of this nature.

On the other hand, it might give umbrage if no notice whatever was taken of her Royal Highness after such a calamity.

It has occurred therefore to us, that the most natural and most proper step would be for you or Colonel Adenbroke to write to the Princess, by command of Prince Leopold, upon this sad event.

Such a communication from the husband to the mother, on the death of the child, would appear liable to no objection, and subject to no inconvenience ; and if his Serene Highness should not object to it, and you will write and send to me the letter, I

will take care that it is conveyed by a messenger to the place where her Royal Highness may be now residing.

I am, with great haste, my dear Sir,

Your very faithful, humble Servant,

LIVERPOOL.

To SIR ROBERT GARDINER, K.C.B.

In other respects the year was closing more prosperously than it had begun. The harvest had been good; and as the distress arising from scarcity and high prices abated, the discontent and inclination to disturbance and sedition also decreased. The conduct of the Ministry, which in an admirable degree mingled compassion with firmness in the measures which they adopted in dealing with the guilty, contributed greatly to the early restoration not only of tranquillity but of loyalty; for while carrying out the extreme penalties of the law in the case of the ringleaders and excitors of the riots which had taken place, they spared their dupes altogether, forbearing even to offer any evidence against many whose acts had brought them within reach of the law, but whom they could afford to pardon as being the victims of delusion rather than the guilty deluders.

While our army remained in France the state of parties in that country was inevitably a subject of anxiety to our ministers; and from the following letter which Lord Liverpool received from Sir C. Long,<sup>1</sup> and from the language which it reports to have been held by the Comte d'Artois himself, it will be seen that the complaints of the Royalist party closely resembled those which in our own country had been made against Charles II., a century and a half before. The loyal party in England complained that the King's acts of oblivion and grace were acts of oblivion to his friends and of grace to his enemies, and in this letter we see the first Prince of the blood expressing similar discontent at finding that those who had adhered to the

<sup>1</sup> Sir Charles Long was employed in France at this moment as a commissioner for regulating some of the pecuniary transactions connected with the army of occupation.

fortunes of the Bourbons, through their fearful struggles and long privations, were now at best only placed on a level with those who had sought the favour of, and had received honours from Napoleon. The dissatisfaction of his partisans was not unnatural, though not altogether reasonable, since they made no account of the difficulties which surrounded Louis, and which were in many respects far greater than those which had attended on the restoration of Charles; but the impolicy of so loud an expression of it was so evident to impartial observers, that, as the close of the letter shows, it was already anticipated that the French Revolution, which had already afforded so many points of singular resemblance to the Great Rebellion in England, was destined to furnish one more in the expulsion of the brother of the restored sovereign when the crown should devolve on him.<sup>1</sup>

*Private.*

Army Pay Office, November 1st, 1817.

DEAR LIVERPOOL,

I was misinformed at Dover, having been told that you were likely to go to town in a day or two, and I did not therefore go round by Walmer as I had intended; but I understand here that you are not expected for some days. I wished to communicate to you the result of my observations at Paris, having mixed a good deal more in French society than I had expected when I set out on my excursion, and having also had an opportunity of hearing from leading persons in opposite parties their different views of the state of things. Monsieur de Cazes, who is the great favourite of the King, and whom I saw a great deal of, assures me that they are sure of a great majority in the Corps Legislatif, but he seems to think that the only mode of obtaining it was by adopting the course they have taken, and

<sup>1</sup> No one entertained this opinion more strongly than the Duke of Wellington. In the Supplementary Despatches (xii. 213) we find him writing in January 1818 to Mr. J. Villiers: "I entertain no doubt how this contest will end. The descendants of Louis XV. will not reign in France; and I must say, and always will say, that it is the fault of Monsieur and his adherents."

by excluding the ultra-Royalists from the Administration. He seems very proud of having got rid of the Duke de Feltre, who leaned much to that party, and to have excluded the ultra-Republicans (Constant and Manuel) in the late elections ; which, however, he would not have done if he had not adopted a skilful manœuvre to delay the returns, and if the Royalists had not behaved well, and assisted the Ministry upon that occasion. The course De Cazes professes to take is a middle one, between opposite and contending parties ; but whether it is that he thinks the popular party the strongest, or their opinions more to his taste, I know not, but he has certainly a great leaning that way, as against the Royalists. The language he holds with respect to this country is, that we have a common interest, that we must act together, and if we do this we need not fear that the tranquillity of Europe will be disturbed, either by the preponderance of Russia, or by any other cause. I have mentioned De Cazes' language, because I saw most of him, and because he seems at present to be the leading minister, but the language of the others is pretty much the same. The Duc de Richelieu does not, I should think, take as much the lead as he used to do ; he is evidently very much under the influence of Pozzo di Borgo, an influence which Pozzo does not find it difficult to exercise, as he seems to be playing quite the French game at Paris.

It is not very difficult to discover the opinions of the Royalists in France, for they utter them in the shape of complaints, and in the most unguarded way, to all who are ready to listen. Monsieur sent to desire I would call upon him, as he wished particularly to speak to me. After many kind expressions towards me of old friendship, he said he should open his heart to me, and that he wished to do so, because he was sure he had been misrepresented in England, and he desired that I would do him justice, particularly to you and Lord Castlereagh. He said he had been accused of wishing to re-establish the "*ancien régime*," to restore the property which had been alienated to the original proprietors, &c. &c. So far from it, he said, he was convinced they had nothing to depend upon but the *Charte Constitutionnelle* ; but in the choice of ministers he decidedly objected to their being taken from those who had been *attachés*

to Buonaparte, or who were known to entertain Republican opinions, to the exclusion of the Royalists. He said, to have emigrated with the Royal family, and to have followed their fortunes, should upon their restoration have been a title to support and protection, and not a ground of proscription. With respect to the national domains, he said he hoped some indemnity would be given to those who had been unjustly deprived, whenever the nation had relieved itself of the burthen of its contributions, though nothing so absurd as a forced restoration to original proprietors could ever be thought of. In fact, nothing could be more just in my opinion than his general views, or more properly measured and gentlemanlike than the terms in which he conveyed his opinions; but after all, it is the application of principles, not the possession of them, from which we can form any judgment. This however is certain, that at the present moment there is no prospect of approximation between the opposite parties. The Royalists say, that the continued residence of the Buonapartists in the Low Countries, the giving the Maréchal's staff to Davoust and the appointment of Molé upon the removal of the Duc de Feltre, are proofs that a faction hostile to the Bourbon interests prevails. The others tell you that unless Monsieur adopts the same course as the King, he had better, in case of the King's demise, pack up and return to England. While the King lives, and while the army of occupation remains, I have no doubt that everything will be tranquil in France, but according to present appearances I could not confidently ensure that tranquillity when those securities no longer exist.

Upon the subject of the contributions, from having heard a great deal of the difficulty of adjusting the various claims, the certainty of consuming a considerable time in attempting any minute examination, and the importance of settling the whole while the army of occupation still remained, I was inclined to the opinion that a compromise would be the best course. The Duke of Wellington, however, with whom I had some conversation upon the subject, seemed to be of a different opinion, and to think that he could induce the French Government to accelerate the examination and liquidation of the claims; he has of course much better means of judging upon the point

than I can have, and as he will be here very shortly, he will state to you his views upon the subject.

Our commission, I see, is signed, and on Tuesday we are to meet and commence our operations. Let me know any day you come to town, and I will call at Fife House. My best compliments to Lady Liverpool, and believe me, dear Liverpool,

Very sincerely yours,

CHARLES LONG.

*P.S.* The principal objects which are to engage the attention of the Assembly at Paris at its first meeting are, the Cours Prévôtales, the Liberty of the Press, the Loi d'Exceptions, and the Concordat. The ministers, to secure the press in its present state, have been obliged to give up the Cours Prévôtal, a court established for the purpose of trying crimes connected with the State, but which it is alleged have been perverted to the purposes of party. The proceedings are in truth very summary, and without a jury. A compromise had been entered into with the Constitutionals to give up this, provided they would not oppose the restraint upon the press. The Loi d'Exception, answering in some degree to our suspension of the Habeas Corpus, will be strongly contested : the Royalists oppose it as thinking it has been used to their prejudice ; all agree that the Concordat must undergo a good deal of alteration.



## CHAPTER XXII.

Withdrawal of the army of occupation—Financial difficulties of the French Government—An attempt is made to assassinate the Duke of Wellington—Lord Liverpool's opinion on the return to cash payments—The Duke of Wellington's opinion concerning the state of affairs and public feeling in France—Lord Liverpool's resolution to make the French Government keep its engagements—The Congress of Aix la Chapelle—Conduct of the Czar—The Duke of Wellington evacuates France—Improved prosperity and tranquillity of Britain—Repeal of the Suspension of Habeas Corpus Act—Lord Grenville grows more friendly to the Ministry—Debate on the Indemnity Bill—Lord Liverpool proposes the resumption of cash payments in 1819—Grant for the building of churches—Lord Liverpool's opinion on church ornamentation—Regulation of infant work in factories—Marriages in the Royal family—The question is raised whether the Prince Regent can be summoned as a witness—Jealousies among some of the inferior Ministers—The Duke of Wellington becomes Master of the Ordnance—Death of the Queen.

THE affairs of France, though they could not with propriety have been brought forward in Parliament (at least, by the ministers, for they did furnish more than one occasion for allusion and invective to the Opposition), continued to occupy no small share of the attention of the Cabinet, and especially of Lord Liverpool, throughout the year 1818. At the close of that year our active interference in them being terminated by the withdrawal of the army of occupation, their anxiety ceased with their responsibility; but till that was accomplished, there was much in the condition of France to fill its well-wishers with solicitude on its account, and in the feeling of the French people towards ourselves much also to keep English statesmen on the

watch. Some of the letters which have already been quoted have shown how difficult was the position of Louis and his ministers; how menacing the attitude of one party in the Chambers; how greatly the disposition of a set of men who arrogated to themselves the merit not only of being the only disinterested partisans of the royal family, but also that of alone perceiving and following its real interests, added to the King's embarrassments. But apart from and beyond perplexities of this character, others also pressed on those who had the chief government of affairs in Paris, if not of a more real, at least of a more urgent character. The finances of France were in a state of embarrassment which seemed almost inextricable: though not more severe than she had deserved, it was nevertheless a heavy punishment for her re-adoption of Napoleon that, in addition to the exhaustion which his wars had inflicted on her, she was now compelled to pay enormous sums to the allied powers, and to support in addition to her own troops a foreign army of 150,000 men. Two years of the period fixed for the occupation of her frontier by that army had now passed, and, as the finances of the country became day by day more entangled, the whole of the pressure was attributed to the occupation as its immediate cause. The allies who furnished the force became unpopular with almost every class, and as the British contingent was the most renowned part of the army, and as the whole was under the command of a British general, the French people identified us with the occupation more than any other nation, and regarded us accordingly with pre-eminent detestation. To such an extent did their ill-feeling towards us go, that an attempt was actually made to assassinate the Duke of Wellington during a visit which he was compelled to pay to Paris. Nor, though the assassin was known, was the French police ever able to bring against him evidence sufficiently conclusive to justify his conviction and punishment.

The suspicion and dislike which the populace entertained towards us was spread more widely, so as in some

degree to affect Louis himself and the Duc de Richelieu, when in the debate on the address in the House of Lords Lord Stanhope made a silly and mischievous speech, full of predictions of evil to the reigning family in France, such as often seem to encourage and even to bring about their own fulfilment. He reminded the peers that "Louis had been twice placed on his throne by the bayonets of foreign armies: that he only retained his power by the protection of the sword." He argued that our detention of Napoleon at St. Helena was "a tacit admission that the affections of the French for their king could not be depended on." He went on to attack the whole French nation as "a people the most unprincipled on the face of the globe, a people who had pursued the career of slaves and robbers, and were now the most abject of the human race." And from this series of denunciations he proceeded to argue that it was the duty of the ministers rather to prolong than to abridge the period during which Wellington and his army were to retain their position on the French frontier. It was not strange that such language, held in such a place, should have produced a deep feeling of indignation in Paris, so deep that a door-keeper at a theatre, in spite of the habitual gallantry of his nation, should even have insulted the speaker's wife.<sup>1</sup> But that the Duc de Richelieu, and Louis who had been so long in England, should have pretended, as they did pretend with some querulousness, that it was in some degree an adoption of Lord Stanhope's insults by Lord Liverpool for the latter to call him in reply, "his noble friend," was a proof that the soreness with which we were viewed reached even to those who of the whole nation ought to have been most superior to such

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Wellington wrote to Lord Liverpool: "Lady Stanhope went the other night to one of the theatres, and asked one of the doorkeepers to show her where her party was. He answered, 'Non, Madame Stanhope. Je vous connois; vous êtes la femme de M. Stanhope qui veut la guerre; qu'il la fasse tout seul.' He then walked off and left her."

a feeling, since none knew so well how disinterested and uniform a friendship we had shown throughout to the whole country, and especially to their Government.

Neither, however, was the Cabinet provoked by this pettishness to depart from the highminded course of policy which they had already resolved to pursue if it should be found practicable; nor did the attack which had been aimed at his life warp the disinterested judgment of the Duke of Wellington, or diminish his honest zeal for a liberal and indulgent settlement of the claims of the allies on France, provided such an arrangement could be reconciled with the security of the existing French Government. And this point was the more difficult to provide for because, if the information which the Duke received from Mr. Baring, who was negotiating the loans which the French treasurer would in any case require, was correct, the French ministers were not treating us with perfect honesty, but, having flattered themselves that the language held in our Parliament had rendered Lord Liverpool desirous of withdrawing the army of occupation, were planning the evasion of some of the terms to which they had previously agreed, or at least were proposing to make their fulfilment conditional on and subsequent to the evacuation of their territory. Baring's own views were in some degree influenced by his opinion of the difficulties which he believed to be perplexing our own treasury: which, as he affirmed to the Duke, must prevent our returning at any early date to cash payments; and which must make our ministers regard with uneasiness the raising of a large loan by the French Government. He, however, was mistaken in the views which Lord Liverpool took of that part of the question, as will be seen by the following letter:

Fife House, 10th February, 1818.

MY DEAR DUKE,

I have received your two letters, for which I am much obliged to you. I am not at all surprised that Mr. Baring is of opinion

that the project of the French ministers, of distributing so much of the French loan as may be for the service of the present year amongst the different commercial and provincial towns in France, will have little or no beneficial effect in relieving the money market of Europe ; indeed, I should conceive that such a measure, though advantageous in a political point of view, as interesting a larger part of France in the peace of the country and the stability of the Government, would as a financial measure be rather prejudicial than otherwise, as the persons who would be concerned in the loan would never be able to manage it with the same prudence and advantage to themselves, and consequently to the public, as the great capitalists of Europe who contracted for the loan of last year, and a large part of it would probably very soon fall upon the general market.

With respect to the continuance of the Bank restriction, I entertain a very different opinion from that avowed by Mr. Baring.

I know enough of the circumstances of the Bank to be perfectly convinced that they might resume their cash payments with safety, and without any material diminution of their issues and paper, if the financial difficulties of France, arising out of the claims of the allies, were not a serious obstacle in their way.

I give this, not as my own opinion and that of Mr. Vansittart, but as the clear opinion of the present governor of the Bank, who is one of the most intelligent men in these matters I have ever known.

We continue of opinion that under all the circumstances of our situation it is a most important point, if possible, to get the whole of the foreign claims on France settled in the course of a year, and the financial arrangements made for that purpose.

We should not dread the effect of a loan of thirty millions<sup>1</sup> in its operation on this country ; we could meet it with precautionary measures which every reasonable man would approve, and the evil effects of such an arrangement, if they should occur, would be of short duration ; but the most embarrassing course for us would be an operation that was to be carried over two or three years. Such a measure would probably keep the money market in a fluctuating and uncertain state during the whole period ; it

<sup>1</sup> Of francs.

would be difficult for us to form any correct estimate of the effect which might be produced by it on our finances, our credit, and our circulation, and how far we should be justified in resorting to remedies which in the other alternative would be perfectly easy.

In short, we look with much more apprehension to three successive loans of ten millions each, in three years, than to one loan of thirty millions in the current year.

When I speak however of the year, I do not mean that the payments should be made before the month of December next. I wish to be understood as speaking of a full year from the time when the loan is contracted, that is from April or May 1818, to April or May 1819.

In explaining to you the view we have taken of what is best for the interests of this country, I am quite aware that our object may not be attainable.

I suspect that the appetite for French stock is not as strong as Mr. Baring and his friends in this country would lead us to believe, and I am strongly inclined to think that we shall find it grow weaker every day, as the period for the evacuation of France by the allied armies approaches, and as the value of the public securities in both countries is better understood.

This may account for the change of language in Mr. Baring since you were last at Paris, and may make him feel that the only mode by which he can now fulfil the expectations which he has held out to France and the allies is by a gradual and progressive operation.

At all events, whatever the decision may be, it is of the utmost importance to us that we should be informed as early as possible of the course which it is intended to adopt. Until this is known, we shall be under the necessity of deferring all the financial arrangements for the service of the current year. The money market in this country must sensibly feel the effect of such a delay, and it will be particularly inconvenient on many accounts to prolong the present session of Parliament beyond the period which is absolutely necessary.

Believe me to be, my dear Duke,

Yours very sincerely,

LIVERPOOL.

*P.S.*—I am not surprised that Lord Stanhope's speech should have made a considerable sensation at Paris. The Duke of Richelieu must, however, have seen by the accounts and the papers that I expressed my positive dissent from all that Lord Stanhope had said respecting the state of France; and even the King or Regent of this country would never take offence at any minister calling a peer, who was in the most decided opposition to Government, "his noble friend," if from former connexion, private habits, or any other cause, he chose so to designate him.

When the French press is putting forth every day the most violent attacks against the English Government and nation, which the ministers of that country have the power by law to prevent and control, it is hardly just in them even to complain of what may result from the freedom of debate in the Parliament of this country, over which they must know the Government has no control.

The very day on which this letter was written the attempt to assassinate the Duke, to which I have already alluded, was made as he was entering his hotel on his return from an evening party. Lord Liverpool, as we shall see, was more distressed at the crime than the Duke himself.

Fife House, February 15th, 1818.

MY DEAR DUKE,

I cannot permit the messenger to depart this evening without troubling you with a few lines to express the horror which was excited in my mind by the account which we received yesterday of the attempt which had been made upon your life.

I entertain a confident expectation, as well from your letter to Bathurst as from that from Monsieur de Cazes to the Marquis d'Osmond, that the wretch who was engaged in the perpetration of this act will be discovered, particularly if the channel through which you have acquired such important information shall not become public before the recherches which are in progress have been completed.

I have only to hope that the failure of this attempt will lead to

the adoption of precautions which may make the repetition of it much more difficult. I will own, however, that, as your brother well knows, I have never been quite easy from the first, during any period when you have been obliged to reside at Paris, and that I shall most heartily rejoice when you have no longer any public duty to compel you to return there. I am aware that all public men are more or less exposed to this species of danger, and that the act might be committed at any other place where you may happen to be living ; but I am persuaded that there are facilities for executing so abominable a purpose, with a chance of escape, in a town like Paris which do not exist elsewhere, independent of the consideration that your very appearance there is likely to put it into the heads of persons who might not otherwise be disposed seriously to think of it.

I will not detain you at present by returning any answer to your letter of the 9th. I will only say that it is a satisfaction to learn that there appears to exist a greater probability of the money arrangements between France and the allies being completed within the year, than when I received your former letters.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

In the fear which Lord Liverpool expresses, that the Duke was in greater danger while in Paris than with the army, Wellington himself was far from coinciding. Indeed, as the plot against him had been hatched in Brussels, and had been long in agitation, he conceived that the conspirators had only delayed their attempt to execute it from the difficulty they found in getting safe access to him while in the French capital. He was, however, greatly displeased at the conduct of the French Ministry, who at first were very lukewarm in their attempts to trace the perpetrator, the Duc de Richelieu even pretending to doubt "the attack having been a real one,"<sup>1</sup> or anything

<sup>1</sup> See the Duke's letter to Lord Bathurst, February 19th, 1818; Supplementary Despatches, xii. 302.



more than a trick to cause alarm ; and "he took two or three opportunities of letting them know how much they were despised for their pusillanimous conduct."<sup>1</sup> He even believed that this contempt extended to their general politics, and was increasing. In his judgment they had "gone backwards during the last six months" in general estimation, and "he confessed that he had a very bad opinion of the stability of their affairs. They did not understand the machine they had in their hands ; and they were running as hard as they could in pursuit of a low vulgar popularity, which they thought the best support of the King's authority and their own." "It was much to be apprehended that, as soon as the allies withdrew from France, the whole fabric would crumble to pieces."<sup>2</sup> For its own sake "he felt very indifferent respecting the Government, and everything belonging to it, and interested himself in their concerns only for the general good and the preservation of the peace of the world.

Such probably were Lord Liverpool's feelings also. But his desire to maintain the Duc de Richelieu's administration for the sake of peace in no respect weakened his resolution to exact from France a proper observance of her engagements. He wrote to the Duke, who on all the questions connected with the expenditure of the army and the contributions to be paid by France to Great Britain had a diplomatic commission combined with his authority as commander-in-chief, that though he was not surprised at the notion adopted by the French ministers, of connecting other subordinate and pecuniary arrangements with the evacuation of their territory, he should absolutely resist it. "We had no course to adopt in such a case but to stand upon our treaties ; and the French Government could not be too soon distinctly informed that, if they looked to the evacuation of France by the allies at the end of the third year, it could only take place in consequence of all the points in litigation being adjusted, and of

<sup>1</sup> Supplementary Despatches, xii. 334.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 380.

arrangements being made for the liquidation of all claims which would leave no discretion to the French Government." He himself (and his letter is dated a week earlier<sup>1</sup> than that of the Duke's from which extracts have been given above) had as little confidence as his correspondent in the absolute stability of the existing state of affairs in France. For he concludes with a reiterated statement of his eagerness to learn that the Duke has completed his negotiations at Paris, and has returned to Cambrai; because "in the present irritated state of the public mind" in the capital, "occasioned as it had been by some false measures on the part of the Government, and by the absurd conduct of the ultra-Royalists, he could never consider France as secure against some dreadful internal convulsion." Another letter places on still stronger grounds his reasons for resolving that the French should not make the fulfilment of their pecuniary engagements conditional on our anticipating the period for the withdrawal of our army, but that our retirement should depend on their previous execution of their compact.

*Private and confidential.*

Fife House, 6th March, 1818.

MY DEAR DUKE,

I received yesterday your letter of the 1st, and am happy to find that the French Government begins seriously to think of negotiating with Mr. Baring, and that they are likely to give up the absurd project of granting the loan for the service of the year 1818 to the French towns, and of postponing the other pecuniary arrangements till the months of November or December. I trust you will be able to bring the allied ministers to the determination that the evacuation at the end of the third year must depend upon all the claims on France being satisfactorily settled. Indeed, I should think they must be aware that they can have no security for any engagement on the part of France from the moment the allied armies have quitted the territory, and that they would then be under the necessity either of

<sup>1</sup> This letter bears date March 3d; that of the Duke, March 8th.

attempting to return when the fortresses were no longer in their power, or of submitting to the indignity of France declining to fulfil her engagements for the mere purpose of insulting them. You know I always thought that if France, from circumstances, should not have had it in her power to fulfil all her pecuniary engagements within the three years, it would be difficult for us to justify our remaining in the country, according to the provisions of the treaty, on such ground alone. But, if the allies are willing to agree to a reasonable compromise on the subject of the private claims, and Mr. Baring and his associates will undertake to make an arrangement by which the French Government shall be enabled to fulfil all their engagements, the question becomes in that case no longer one of impracticability ; the means are open to France to execute her part of the treaty, and I think we have a right, and are bound, to call upon her to do so before she can expect us to evacuate the country.

The delay which has already occurred in the decision of the French Government with respect to their loan and budget has been a serious inconvenience to us. I should hope, however, that by the close of the Easter holidays their arrangements will be brought to such a point as will enable us to proceed with the measures which may be necessary for our own public service. Our revenue is fortunately improving, agriculture is generally recovering, and our manufactures, with very few exceptions, were never in a more flourishing state.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

The language which, in consequence of this letter, the Duke felt authorised to hold to the French ministers, began to produce its effect. And though he believed that "they still intended to delay their determination as long as possible," they began to deal with Mr. Baring, the great loan contractor, in a manner which gave him a higher idea of their sincerity than he had previously entertained, Mr. Baring never having kept secret his power and willingness to negotiate a loan for them of sufficient magnitude to enable them to satisfy all the demands of

the allies. We, on our part, adhering to the spirit of liberality which throughout the negotiations of 1814 and 1815 had honorably distinguished our policy from that of our allies; and which, if it erred at all, erred rather on the side of unduly sacrificing than of narrowly regarding our own interests, authorised the Duke even to make a material abatement from our own claims, as an example to induce Austria and Russia to reduce theirs. Those powers followed our example in a slighter degree: and by the end of May the transactions between the two Governments were placed on a footing which, Lord Liverpool wrote to the Duke, "if not entirely satisfactory, would at least obviate many of the most serious difficulties which we might have had to apprehend." The fact was, that the army of occupation had been established on the frontier for two objects: first, indeed, to deter the disaffected party in France from an outbreak, and to give time for angry feelings to subside, and for the nation in general to become accustomed to the rule of the restored dynasty; but, in the second place, it was also to afford the allies a security that the pecuniary engagements into which France had entered with them would be faithfully observed. If we could obtain sufficient satisfaction on the latter subject, the former was one on which Louis and his ministers might fairly be trusted to judge for themselves; and they were unanimous in their belief that the continuance of a foreign army on their territory rather increased their difficulties, through the irritation which it excited, than tended to protect them from danger.

The way having thus been smoothed for a final adjustment of the whole transaction, a congress was held at Aix la Chapelle, in September, to settle the necessary details. The Emperor, the Czar, and the King of Prussia came in person, attended by the same ministers who, four years before, had conducted their share of the negotiations at Vienna. As on that occasion, Lord Castlereagh also crossed the Channel, and, with the Duke of Welling-

ton and Canning as a third in their commission, virtually directed the deliberations of the whole congress. The Duc de Richelieu himself attended as the representative of his sovereign ; being charged by him to make every sacrifice to procure the immediate evacuation of his country ; and to assure the allies that, if they desired to see him safe on his throne, the one condition indispensable to his security was that the disaffected should no longer be able to reproach him with the presence of a foreign foe on French soil.

When both parties were thus animated by a common desire to arrive at the same result, the settlement of the conditions was comparatively easy. Accordingly, in less than a week from the first meeting of the plenipotentiaries, the preliminaries of a new treaty<sup>1</sup> were signed, which provided for the withdrawal of the foreign troops at the end of November, and for the payment of the sums for which France was liable. Some other points still remained to be settled, the most important of which was the question whether, or how far, France should be admitted to form a member of the quadruple alliance, established in November 1815 between Great Britain, Austria, Russia, and Prussia. Richelieu naturally looked upon her being permitted so to associate herself with those Powers as important both to the dignity of the country abroad, and to the strength of his administration at home, and Lord Castlereagh was not disinclined to gratify him. Lord Liverpool, however, saw difficulties in the complete and formal admission of Louis's Government into the alliance which escaped his colleague, though he was quite prepared to afford France all the real advantages which could arise to her from such an

<sup>1</sup> This was the treaty signed on the same day as the Treaty of Paris, which renewed the Treaties of Chaumont and Vienna, and was especially aimed against any subsequent attempt of the partisans of Napoleon to disturb the arrangements now made by the Treaty of Paris.

incorporation; and the view which the two ministers took of the question, and Lord Liverpool's plan, which was finally adopted, will be best seen by the following letters:

*Private.*

Aix la Chapelle, 4th October.

MY DEAR BATHURST,<sup>1</sup>

You must not be afraid in England that we shall damp the Emperor of Russia's ardour too much; I shall, on the contrary, contribute as far as I can to feed the flame of his enthusiasm, which is perhaps our best security for the stability of his system; but, his Imperial Majesty having only passed *one day* in a Polish Parliament, has no very clear notions of what can be hazarded in a British House of Commons, and would certainly be disposed to commit himself to so many details that before the day of action came, he and our treaty would probably be sent about our business; at all events, our hands would be so completely tied by previous explanations, and negatives given to supposed cases, that the alliance would stand ten times more feebly characterized in the eyes of France (at least as far as we were concerned) than if it is left to operate in the gloom and mystery of a possible concert upon the case when it shall arrive.

I think considerable advantage may result from his military Commission, if it is not made a circumstance of too much *éclat*. The Duke of Wellington is to have the conduct of it, and the object will be, taking two months as the latest period stipulated for the conveying of the various contingents into the field, to digest a regular plan of march and assembly, so that everything may be rife for instant execution. In order to avoid an insulting display of preparations, which might arouse a bad temper in France, I have suggested that these arrangements, when agreed upon, should not take the shape of a convention, which we

<sup>1</sup> A letter written on the same day to Lord Liverpool, says:

"MY DEAR LIVERPOOL,

"As we agreed, I have thrown as much of what has occurred as I could either into official or private letters, addressing them to Bathurst, but directing the bag to be sent to you immediately upon its being landed at Dover." Lord Bathurst had formal charge of Lord Castlereagh's department during his absence.

could hardly withhold from Parliament, but of a secret protocol in explanation of our existing engagement, which I conceive we may do.

The course of our proceedings here, then, if our ideas should be adopted, would be, first, a Treaty of Evacuation to be signed with France, in which all the pecuniary engagements would be disposed of; secondly, a protocol, or declaration, to be made public, in which any sentiments arising out of the present conferences might find their place, and in which the allied sovereigns might announce their indissoluble union, maintenance of engagements, &c., and proceed to declare their friendly sentiments towards France, and their desire to include his Most Christian Majesty in the Concert established by the sixth article of their treaty of alliance; thirdly, a joint note to be addressed to the Duc de Richelieu, as was done at Paris in 1815, in which might be introduced a suitable acknowledgment of the fidelity with which his Most Christian Majesty had fulfilled his engagements, which might be followed by an expression of the sentiments which had always animated, and would continue to animate, the councils of the allies towards France; and to close with an invitation to the King of France to participate in the Concert under the sixth article. The whole to keep within the tenour of the treaty as approved by Parliament, and not bringing any of its delicate points too much in view, so as to provoke discussion. The fourth, and last instrument, would be the secret protocol already alluded to, in which all military details would be disposed of, and the concoction of which would operate a moral renewal of the alliance, perhaps of the most efficient description, and without exposing us to the inconvenience of putting our whole policy at issue before a new Parliament. I do not despair of this system working its own way, for I find that those who are trying to do something else very soon arrive at some difficulty which they cannot surmount.

The Duke of Kent and the Duchess were here yesterday evening: his Royal Highness is to pay his respects to the sovereigns to-day, to dine with the King of Prussia at two (to which dinner the same persons as dined before with the King of Prussia and since with the Emperor of Austria are invited). Their Royal

Highnesses are to honour us with their company to dinner at six, and to proceed to a ball given to the sovereigns by the town in the evening, and to proceed on their journey to-morrow morning.

Believe me, my dear Lord,

Ever faithfully yours,

CASTLEREAGH.

Fife House, 20th October, 1818.

MY LORD,

We have attentively considered the outline which you have given us in your despatch, No. 10, of the probable result of the discussions amongst the allied ministers as to the state of our existing engagements, and the measures which it may be necessary to adopt in consequence.

We continue of opinion that the greatest inconvenience would arise from inviting France to be an acceding party to the quadruple alliance of November 1815, and that there would be still greater objections, if possible, to the conclusion of a new and more extended treaty.

Whilst we are strongly impressed with these sentiments, we are nevertheless of opinion that, after the desire manifested by France to be admitted into the alliance, great disadvantage would arise from excluding her from any deliberation which the four Powers might judge it expedient to hold hereafter amongst themselves, either in consequence of the sixth article of the Treaty of Alliance, or on any other accession when they may have collected to deliberate upon the interests provided for in the last peace.

The project, therefore, to meet the desire manifested on the part of France by inviting the French Government to become a party to any such deliberation, whenever it may occur, appears to be the best expedient for preserving our existing engagements unvaried, and at the same time obviating all unnecessary jealousy on the part of France.

Upon the latter part of your despatch we cannot but express the great doubts we entertain whether it would in any way be advisable by any new act to proclaim to Europe that it was the intention of the four Powers to hold continual meetings at stipulated periods. We admit that the sixth article of the



Treaty of Alliance contemplates such meetings, and we are satisfied that, under the circumstances as they now exist, when the allied troops are to be withdrawn from France, it may be of the utmost importance to make the people of that country feel that they are still under a sort of surveillance. We are, therefore, of opinion that the allied powers should fix a period at which they will hold another meeting ; this would not be liable to the objections which we think might result from a series of such meetings being now proclaimed as part of a permanent system.

We are persuaded that the notion of such meetings would create a great degree of jealousy amongst the other powers of Europe, which no declaration that could be issued would adequately remove. The prominent necessity for them will cease to exist whenever the French Government, left to itself, shall have proved that it can maintain tranquillity at home, and the relations of peace with other countries ; and though the mind might anticipate other circumstances under which such meetings might be productive of many advantages, one may likewise contemplate those under which they might be likely to lead to great embarrassment.

The sixth article in the Treaty of Alliance, as well as some other stipulations in that treaty, could hardly have been adopted for the first time under such circumstances as the present. We are by no means desirous of seeing it abrogated, but we do not think it would be politic to reinforce it by any new declaration of a general nature. We can see likewise no adequate advantage to be derived from any such measure ; for, if the four Powers should agree to meet in two or three years from this time, it would then be completely open to them to determine, according to the state of France and of Europe at that time, how far it might be necessary or advisable to meet again.

Believe me, &c.

To LORD CASTLEREAGH.

LIVERPOOL.

Another despatch written three weeks later repeats the objections to the conclusion of a new treaty, without which France could not be made a party to the alliance, with the additional arguments that such an act would keep

the public "mind of Europe in a state of restlessness; that it might give offence to such of the Powers as were not invited to be parties to it; and that it would be a question full of difficulty, and possibly a matter of future contention, whether such Powers should be invited or permitted to accede to it." Lord Castlereagh had already stated to the allies that, "according to the principles we had throughout laid down for our own conduct, we could not on any account be parties to any guarantee which such a treaty might contain:" a declaration of which Lord Liverpool expressed his cordial approval; finding a further inducement to urge him to do his utmost "to prevent the conclusion of any such treaty" in the fact that, "if he should fail in these endeavours, we might be placed in so embarrassing a situation, if we were to refuse any participation in it," that we might feel compelled "to a qualified accession to it, so far as good offices only were concerned."

As on former occasions, the Czar was very busy in trying to impress every one with the same idea of his abilities and influence which he himself entertained; and two letters from Lord Stewart are not uninteresting, as showing the language his Imperial Majesty was in the habit of holding, the views by which he was, or believed himself to be actuated, and the extent and character of his influence.

*Private.*

Aix la Chapelle, October 19th, 1818.

MY DEAR LORD,

My brother has persuaded me to address you such few anecdotes or details here, as my limited means enable me to pick up. You must be aware the conferences are so secret, and so little is divulged publicly of what passes, it would be vain to flatter one's self one can know anything of the matter. The dispositions of the Emperor of Russia seem really so excellent, that they have lulled the most alarmed, and satisfied the most suspicious, and Prince Metternich is one of the first to do him justice.

It has happened to me to-day to have another long interview with him of nearly two hours. Owing to Sir T. Lawrence's machinery not having arrived he has unfortunately been idle since his arrival, but he conceived the idea that, if he could manage to draw him in crayon, in his absence, when his materials arrived, he could put him on canvas, and forward his work. To achieve this I accompanied Sir Thomas to the Emperor's to-day : his Majesty has been very complying about this portrait, as he begged it to be known that he never sat except once to Gerard, and that he did it entirely for the Prince Regent *par obéissance*, as he had determined often never to sit again.

During his Imperial Majesty's sitting to Sir Thomas, he entered largely into conversation with me on various subjects. He expressed his great desire to be in England again *sans ceremonie*. He eulogized all our establishments, and admitted his great desire to copy from us everything good. He reverted to his present alliances again, his own Empire, and his present objects. With regard to the first, he said that so long as the King of Prussia, the Emperor of Austria, himself, and he believed the Prince Regent, lived, the treaties existing were as sacred as if written with their own blood. To suspect him for a moment of entering into engagements with other Powers was to believe him a *gens foutre*, without truth, rectitude, or principle, worse or as bad as Buonaparte. But, thanks to God, he was a Christian, and facts would prove his conduct, and justice would be done to his intentions by posterity. His thoughts day and night were occupied in maturing the system that would give peace to the world for thirty or forty years, which was as long as human foresight perhaps ought to reach. All his actions with his allies were regulated by the most scrupulous consideration not to take too high a tone, not to give umbrage to any one, or in any way to afford ground for the doubts that in spite of all he did, from the wickedness of the world, did prevail.

His expedition to Paris from the reviews, he said (adverting to a trifle), was even so regulated, that he should sit down at the King's dinner-table, and immediately after dinner leave the palace, and neither enter another house or see another person,

but those he met in the presence of the King. "All my conduct should satisfy my friends, but they still want me to reduce my army, and that I never will do: I am responsible to God, and to my country, as well as other nations. But I am unjustly represented on this subject, for before we separate, I shall place before all the ministers the exact *tableau* of my army now and what it was, and then they will see that I have reduced according to my system and according to my position more than either Austria or Prussia. Austria and Metternich are very wrong about me: would some villages more or less, in Poland or elsewhere, compensate me for acting morally wrong towards my friend the Emperor Francis? What can I want from him? Galicia would do me no good. If they say it would give me more money, *grace à Dieu, je n'en ai pas besoin*. I have nearly paid my debts, and all I wish is to reign with justice over the subjects the Almighty has placed under my control. But I must keep my army as it is, and no *parleurs* shall induce me to disorganize what I consider is for the safety of my immense empire. If other persons knew the details as well as I do, they would see the actual necessity of my measure, as it takes me two years to collect my recruits, and they would be two years returning from whence they came; and what would be my military means if I was to be prevailed upon to reduce my army, and from any circumstance had to re-assemble it, if not on the side of Europe, my Persian or Turkish neighbours?" &c.

Many other similar assurances occurred very much in detail, and indeed, my dear lord, to hear him reason, and to *doubt his dispositions*, is to me quite impossible, and I make this avowal the rather as I have been living in an atmosphere where it is impossible not to be infected by the suspicion that reigns. I have not time to add more, but various parts of the conversation were very curious and interesting.

We celebrated yesterday the battle of Leipzig by an immense dinner given by the King of Prussia. There were seventy at table, all however military, none of the diplomatists appearing, I believe, out of consideration towards the Duc de Richelieu. The day commenced by a Church thanksgiving and parade. The Princess of Orange and the Princess of Tour and Taxis

dined at the dinner. One toast alone was given, the anniversary of the day we were met to celebrate. I beg your pardon, my dear lord, for having intruded so much on your time, and I beg you will believe me, ever

Your sincerely obliged and affectionate servant,

STEWART.

*Private.*

Aix, October 20th, 1818.

MY DEAR LORD,

Although my brother entertains sanguine hopes that the budget which he transmits to England will prove satisfactory, and although the Emperor of Russia's anti-Gallican tone and devotion to the quadruple alliance has made the affairs of this Congress comparatively lighter than many of the ministers expected, still there has been much difficulty and niceness of management in bringing points to their present issue.

Many different views were taken of the questions in detail. Both the Russian and Austrian Governments are fond of *memoires* with theoretical reasoning. Both are on the *qui vive*, and jealous of each other, and personally between Metternich and Capo d'Istria no great cordiality exists. It was, therefore, a most fortunate and wise proceeding that our plenipotentiaries easily compressed and fixed the principles of the proceedings, which was done in Castlereagh's first paper, which I think it may be interesting to you to receive. Before it underwent the French construction it met with universal approbation in all quarters, and, from all I learn, cleared a great deal of rubbish away that was already registered in the bureaux of Vienna and St. Petersburg. The weight of England has been prodigious at this meeting. The dislike between the Emperor of Russia and Metternich renders the latter inefficient to transact delicate points with him; Hardenberg, from his infirmities and declining weakness, is incapable of taking a prominent line; Bernstorff is kept in the background by Hardenberg, and the minister of the Emperor pretends to see the delicate points in a different light from his master: hence, had it not been for the unwearied labour of my brother and the Duke of Wellington, their repeated conferences with the Emperor personally, it is evident that no progress would have been made.

I think Metternich has acted fairly, and given up, as he says, his opinion on little points when it at all prevented general results.

I think he is sore on the Emperor's going to Paris after the reviews ; indeed, he maintains that where a large expense was to be incurred by this display, it would have been much better avoided, as the Sovereigns were assembled to do business, not to review troops in France. How far the feeling of jealousy at his own Emperor being a little in the background in this arrangement may influence him I know not, but he is evidently annoyed at this arrangement.

You know the Emperor of Russia proceeds to Vienna from here, and the Emperor Francis has determined to make a tour in Italy the beginning of February, and remain till July, thus taking advantage of the time when he is sure he cannot be accompanied by his imperial colleague. There is not near so much interest or humour going on here for the idlers as at Vienna or Paris, for things are kept much more secret, and every one is most profoundly in the dark, which will, I trust, be my apology for not giving you more interesting detail.

Believe me, my dear Lord,

Ever yours most affectionately,

STEWART.

It will have been seen that Alexander could not well have overrated the favorable impression which he made on the writer. His shrewder brother, the Foreign Secretary, did not listen to all the assurances which were addressed to him with so little suspicion, though on the whole in his mind also confidence preponderated over doubt. He writes to Lord Liverpool, "You will probably wish to know my real opinion upon the sincerity of all that is passing around me. My opinion has always been that, whether sincere or not, we ought to meet it as if it was ; for there is no real security in dealing in the language of distrust, where your measures cannot be of a precautionary description ; and when we, at least, are out of the reach of immediate danger. But my belief

is, that the Emperor of Russia is in the main in earnest in what he says. Not that he has not perhaps had before him projects for other alliances, and possibly conventions; but I do not believe he has himself given any formal encouragement to the one, or ratified the other; but that whatever has passed, if anything, has been the produce of some of his foreign agents, brought forward as remedies to meet the alleged projects against Russian influence. Perhaps in these cases, as in that of the overtures of the French exiles in the Low Countries, the Emperor has suffered himself to be approached, and delayed the moment of his declaration upon them. I have also reason to think that he has been led to believe that there are secret engagements existing between Great Britain and Austria; but with all these ideas working upon a jealous and haughty mind, my persuasion is that he means to pursue a peace policy. That he aims at sway; but that he has no desire to change his connection, or to render the Revolutionary spirit more active."

He adds that Metternich (with whom he himself was in constant and cordial communication) agreed with him in his opinion, both of the mischievous inclinations of the Russian agents, and of the general disposition to peace and good faith which animated the Emperor himself. "Upon the whole, matters seemed working as we could wish; and we had only to encourage the sentiments of attachment of which all the sovereigns were so prodigal towards each other, and which, he believed, were at the moment sincerely entertained. He (Lord Castlereagh) was quite convinced that past habits, common glory, and these occasional meetings, displays, and repledges were among the best securities Europe now had for a durable peace."

As has been already mentioned, before the end of October the new arrangements had all been satisfactorily concluded. During November the Duke of Wellington

gradually withdrew his troops from the different fortresses, and marched them to the coast, from which they embarked for England, and on the last day of the month he handed the fortresses over to the Duc d'Angoulême, who had troops under his command to form the new garrisons.<sup>1</sup>

The general wisdom of the policy adopted towards France by the allies, and towards both by Great Britain, needs no other eulogy, as indeed it could receive no greater, than is contained in the fact that it led to the most durable peace which modern Europe had ever enjoyed; and that, when twelve years afterwards it was in some degree disturbed by a fresh revolution in France, and by the contagion which infected the adjacent country of Belgium, that event was neither caused by any intrigue of the foreign Powers which had been parties to this arrangement, nor even by their indifference and supineness; but arose from acts of folly on the part of the French rulers which no advice or remonstrance could prevent, though, as we have seen, our own statesmen had already foreseen the probability both of the rashness and of the catastrophe which followed it.

Meanwhile the domestic affairs of the nation were gradually recovering their usual and healthy tone. It may almost be said without arrogance that a steady increase of prosperity is so completely the normal state of the kingdom that any disturbing cause which can long arrest it must not only be one of extraordinary force and violence, but also one which threatens to prove of a permanent character. This, however, had not been the case in the previous year. The disaffection which had agitated the country in 1817 had been clearly traceable to distress which, though severe, was temporary. A favorable harvest had done its part towards the removal of the distress, and when at the end of January Parliament re-assembled, the Royal speech congratulated the members on "the improve-

<sup>1</sup> The principal documents relating to the evacuation of France, and the accompanying arrangements, are to be found in the "Annual Register" for 1819 (App. to Chron. 125 *seq.*)



ment which had taken place in the course of the last year in almost every branch of our domestic industry, and the present state of public credit." The session which was opened under auspices so fair was unusually brief, and unusually free from party struggles, which, in the House of Lords, were almost confined to the consideration of matters connected with the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in the preceding year, and the resumption of cash payments.

The improvement in the general state of the country seemed to bear such marks of permanence that on the very first day of the session Lord Liverpool gave notice of the intention of the ministers to repeal the bill which had authorised the suspension of the Habeas Corpus, and which yet wanted several weeks of expiring. And some of the arrangements connected with this and other kindred measures seemed at one time to open a prospect to the Government of obtaining from Lord Grenville himself some of the assistance and co-operation which his two or three relations and connections who constituted his party were eager to give, if they could procure from the minister such a recognition of its value as would be implied in their admission to office. Lord Liverpool was about to propose the re-appointment of such a secret committee as that to which he had in the preceding session submitted documents illustrating the condition of the country, of a character which could not with propriety or even safety be divulged to Parliament and the nation at large. And the following letters show the tact with which he conciliated adversaries as skilfully as he managed colleagues; and secured support for one measure which he probably suspected many of Lord Grenville's friends would be inclined to oppose :

Fife House, 29th January, 1818.

MY DEAR LORD,

I am sorry to be obliged to break in upon you whilst you are still in the country, but it is necessary that I should inform you that

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it is intended on Monday next to communicate to the two Houses of Parliament the information which has been received respecting the internal state of the country since the last Session.

These papers will, of course, be referred to secret committees of both Houses, and the report on them will very probably lead to a bill of indemnity, which appears in the present instance to be necessary, not only with respect to the ministers of the Crown, and those who have acted under the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act (as in 1801), but likewise to the magistrates and other civil authorities for the proceedings they were obliged to adopt in some of the disturbed districts.

It is desirable, for obvious reasons, that these committees should consist, as nearly as circumstances will allow, of the same members as composed the committees of last year.

You will recollect that the Duke of Bedford was nominated upon the first committee, but declined attending. Lord Talbot was afterwards substituted in his place on the second committee, and his absence in Ireland will make it necessary now to fix upon some other person in his room.

Lord St. Germans is prevented from coming to town on account of the illness of his wife. It is proposed, therefore, to submit to the House the names of Lord Lansdowne and Lord Camden instead of Lord Talbot and Lord St. Germans.

In all other respects it is wished that the committee and the House of Lords should be the same; and, if it will not be particularly inconvenient to you to attend, I trust you will have the goodness to allow your name to be again proposed.

The ballot will probably take place on Tuesday, and the committee will meet the day after. I have no idea that the investigation need be of any long duration.

I am, with sincere regards, my dear Lord,

Yours very faithfully,

To LORD GRENVILLE.

LIVERPOOL.

MY DEAR LORD,

Dropmore, January 29, 1818.

I confess I feel the greatest reluctance to the proposal contained in your letter which I received this morning. When I undertook a similar duty last year it was unwillingly indeed, but

under such circumstances as I thought left me no choice. The person of the Prince Regent and the authority of Parliament had been outraged, the peace of the metropolis disturbed, and great apprehensions existed for the tranquillity of the principal manufacturing districts; and I was unwilling, in such a state of things, to decline any service in which it was thought, on whatever grounds, that I could be useful.

To engage anew, at the commencement of the present session, in a service of the same description, with motives so much less urgent, would seem, I think, to imply an undertaking for the discharge of much more active Parliamentary duties than I am likely to perform in the course of it; and I cannot therefore but hope that you will find it convenient to substitute some other name for mine in the list of the committee.

I write this, however, under the first impressions produced by your letter, and I would not wish you to consider it as a final answer should you continue to think my being on the committee a matter of any consequence; in that case, as my decision, however unimportant to others, is not wholly so to myself, I could wish to reconsider the subject and to reserve my answer till Sunday, so as that you may receive it by Monday, which I am aware is the latest time to which the matter can be kept in any uncertainty.

I have the honour to be, my dear Lord,

Most truly and faithfully yours,

To LORD LIVERPOOL.

GRENVILLE.

Fife House, 31st January, 1818.

MY DEAR LORD,

I have this moment received the favour of your answer to my letter, and I can assure you that I have the greatest reluctance in requesting you to reconsider your decision, and notwithstanding all the advantage which I feel would result from your personal opinion upon a subject of so much importance, I would certainly under all the circumstances have abstained from pressing you further, if the proceeding in question had been a *new* one, or was not in truth the necessary continuance and completion of the business which took place in the last session.

In this view of it I do not see how any persons can be competent to form a fair judgment, except those who were concerned in the inquiries during the last year ; and it is for this reason that it is judged expedient to propose to reappoint in both Houses all the same members who were selected for the former committee as are now capable of attending.

There will certainly arise considerable inconvenience from the introduction of any new members : this however is unavoidable, but it affords an additional motive for the reappointment of those who are already well informed upon the subject. I should hope that this explanation may induce you to reconsider the matter, and I will only add that I do not see any occasion in that case for your coming to town before the committee is actually appointed, or that there can be any necessity for your attending in the House more than once in the course of any proceeding which may grow out of the report.

Believe me to be, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

The result of the last letter was that Lord Grenville waived his scruples, formed one of the Committee to which he was invited, and thus acquired information which led him to support the Indemnity Bill, though Lord Grey opposed it. Nor was he on any occasion found in opposition to the Administration during the session except on the question of the resumption of cash payments, which was hardly a party question. On the repeal of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act no serious debate could well arise, because those who had opposed the measure at first were not likely to object to its being withdrawn now. But the proposal of the Indemnity Bill, which was alluded to in Lord Liverpool's letter, gave rise to an animated discussion, in which the whole policy of the ministers during the past year was vehemently assailed by Lord Lansdowne and Lord Erskine. In the preceding session very angry comments had been made on Lord Sidmouth's conduct as Home Secretary, for having received communications as to the extent of the disaffection, and the

projected enterprises of the disaffected, among whom he had been at one time enrolled, from a man named Oliver ; some members having even gone so far as to impute to Lord Sidmouth the baseness of having employed the man to foment insurrection in order to betray it. There was not the slightest reason for believing that Oliver had in any instance stimulated any man to misconduct ; and Lord Lansdowne now, while avoiding the expression of any opinion as to his conduct, formally and pointedly acquitted the Secretary of State of having given him the slightest instruction or encouragement to act the treacherous part of which he was accused. His resistance to the bill was founded on the strange argument that it was worse than the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, since that was but a temporary measure, while this was a permanent denial of redress to those who had been injured by it, with respect to whom he described it by a strange exaggeration or perversion of language as “a robbery and confiscation of their legal rights and claims ;” and he contended that the suspension itself was proved to have been a failure by the fact that in Derbyshire an insurrection had broken out in spite of it.

Lord Liverpool could fairly retort that there was abundant proof that other outbreaks had been contemplated, which, as they had not taken place, had probably been prevented by the suspension. That it was at least equally probable that Brandreth's rising, and the whole conspiracy of which that rising formed a part, would have assumed much more formidable dimensions if it had not been for that measure. But he was willing to rest the defence of the suspension, not on problematical assertions, but on general principles. As he presented the question to the House, it was “whether such a danger had not existed as made it wise, with a view to the public safety, and humane as regarded culpable but unfortunate individuals, to vest a power in the executive Government which might indirectly, and by its very name, operate to put down the

mischief without having recourse to measures of the last severity, under whose rigours the lives even of well-disposed persons might unfortunately be sacrificed. His firm and thorough conviction was that, under all the circumstances, it was a measure of humanity as well as justice, and that there never had been a measure of preventive justice which had repressed evils of a more extensive or heinous nature. After such a report as had been presented to the House by the Secret Committee of last year, a bill of indemnity seemed to follow as a measure due in justice to those who had been entrusted with the difficult task of carrying the Act of Suspension into execution. And they now moved it, on the ground of the belief expressed by the Committee of the present year, that the powers committed by Parliament to their discretion had not been abused. For he contended that it could not be refused except on the ground that the ministers or magistrates, whom the bill before them would protect, had been guilty of wanton abuse of the powers so put into their hands."

Lord Erskine followed the Prime Minister with a speech more calculated to work on the feelings of a jury than on the judgment of calm and sober-minded statesmen. He "appealed to the present conduct of the whole population of the island, who, as if they had all been the children of the same parent, were shedding the tears of affection and sorrow on the unhappy loss of the presumptive heirs of the British crown, as evidence that it was the height of absurdity to doubt the loyalty of the great body of the people, and to consider that the ordinary laws were not sufficient to protect the Government." And he argued "that the fact that under the suspension many persons had been arrested who were subsequently discharged without being brought to trial was in itself a proof that the powers given to the magistrates had been abused."

The House, by a majority of 100 to 33, adopted the views of the ministers, and there is probably no one at

the present day, when the question may be considered impartially, without regard to the chance of damaging or supporting an Administration, who will hesitate to agree with the Parliament, and to pronounce that the circumstances of the time had abundantly justified the Cabinet in its policy of the preceding years, and that the magistrates who had aided to carry it out had a claim to be protected in their discharge of the duties that had been thus imposed upon them.

It has been mentioned that on the question of the resumption of cash payments Lord Grenville withdrew from the ministers the support which he had afforded them on the Bill of Indemnity. On that subject, indeed, he led the Opposition. Lord Liverpool, who proposed that the restrictions on the Bank should be continued for another year, so as not to cease till July 1819, explained that his motion was not founded on either the necessities or the wishes of the Bank itself. That body was perfectly prepared to resume cash payments at once; but he felt bound to take into his consideration the influence which the "extraordinary amount of the loan about to be raised by the French Government must have in the circulation of this and every kingdom in Europe. That it would affect the currency of every country he thought a proposition too clear to be disputed; and it was absolutely necessary to guard against the danger arising from this cause. Nor could he conceive anything more to be deprecated than the resumption of cash payments at such a moment." Lord Grenville's objections to his proposal were in reality founded on the belief, which he asserted with great energy, that "there never had been a more fatal measure than the original suspension." He had therefore always "looked with the greatest anxiety to the time when we should be free from that clog. And though he had not thought the period of a year after the close of the war too long a delay, yet he conceived that Parliament had given the country a sacred pledge that

the restriction should not be renewed, except under the pressure of insuperable difficulties, of which he denied the existence at present." He even urged the early resumption of cash payments as a moral duty, because, in his opinion, the suspension of them had caused a great increase in the crime of forgery. Lord Lansdowne, who followed him, and agreed in the propriety of returning to a metallic currency, at the same time ventured to reiterate the prophecy that the restrictions would never be removed. "There would always be some reason for continuing them. Now it was a French war. The next time it would be some other pretext, but there would never be any want of some reason or other for persevering in this dangerous course." The more elaborate debates in which the matter was discussed in the ensuing year will afford a fitter opportunity for examining the whole subject. At present it is sufficient to point out, not only that Lord Lansdowne's prediction was falsified by the event, but that the strongest proof possible of the sincerity of Lord Liverpool when he affirmed his conviction that cash payments afforded the only safe foundation for the finance of the country, was supplied by the course which he was now adopting, of proposing the prolongation of the existing system for so short a period as a single year. It was evident that he was counting the days till, as a statesman, he might feel justified in countenancing a step which, as a financier, he felt to be the only one compatible with the maintenance of public credit.

Important as this question was at the time, its interest was but of a temporary character, since to whatever forebodings an occasional antagonist of the Government might give utterance, the real question was only what the ministers asserted it to be, on what particular day cash payments should be resumed; and in no degree was a doubt raised, or for a single moment entertained by them, whether they should ever be resumed at all. But another measure which they brought forward this year wears



a wholly different aspect. It laid the foundation of a system on which the nation has been constantly acting since that day, and will, it may be hoped, ever so continue to act; and it is one which is pre-eminently honorable to Lord Liverpool's administration, and to himself to whom it was mainly owing, inasmuch as it was the first instance for more than a century<sup>1</sup> of the recognition by Government of its duty to provide for the spiritual wants of the people, as well as for their political liberty, or their financial and industrial prosperity. A paragraph of the Royal speech at the beginning of the session had "particularly directed the attention of both Houses to the deficiency which had long existed in the number of places of public worship belonging to the Established Church, when compared with the increased and increasing population of the country." As the supply of such a deficiency of necessity involved a grant of money, the matter was first brought before the House of Commons by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, in the middle of March, proposed the appointment of a commission whose charge should be to build or promote the building of additional churches and chapels in England; recommending at the same time the grant for that purpose of a million of money. He enforced the urgent necessity of such a measure by a brief statement of the condition of one or two dioceses in respect of their church accommodation as compared with their population, admitting that he of course had selected those in which the disproportion was most glaring. London, for instance, had a population of 1,129,451, but the church and episcopal chapels could scarcely contain more than the odd numbers; while nearly a million could find no accommodation in any consecrated

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Vansittart, in bringing the subject before the House of Commons, reminded them that a measure of a similar kind has been adopted in Queen Anne's reign (limited, however, to the metropolis), by the operation of which eleven churches were built in different parts of London.

building. Nearly seven-eighths of the population of the metropolis were therefore excluded from the ordinary services of the Church. But as they could not be equally excluded from the extraordinary services, as they must be christened, buried, and married, the clergy of the comparatively few churches which did exist among them were overworked to an extent which the most iron strength must have been incapable of enduring for any lengthened time. One curate affirmed that on a recent Sunday on which he had taken a friend's duty he had performed two morning services and an evening service, having assistance only for one sermon. He had married so many couples that he had forgotten the precise number ; he had read the Churching of Women twice, he had christened 17 children, and had read the Burial Service five times, over seven bodies ; it having been found impossible in every instance to afford the dead the decent respect of a separate funeral. He had been at work incessantly from nine in the morning till between seven and eight in the evening, and he understood that what he had done on this occasion did not exceed the average Sunday employment of his friend the curate. The following letter records Lord Liverpool's sentiments when the grant passed the House of Commons without a single voice being raised in dissent :

*Private.*

Fife House, 21st March, 1818.

MY DEAR HARROWBY,

You will have seen that our vote for the building of churches passed without any difficulty or material opposition. No objection whatever appears to have been taken to it either on the part of the Dissenters or the Economists. The principle we may therefore consider as sanctioned, and the only difficulties which can remain are matters of detail.

I am very anxious, however, that we should press the matter forward as rapidly as we can, consistently with decency, and the forms of Parliament. I would rather even pass the measure with some imperfections than delay it, for if we lose the present favorable opportunity we cannot say when another may arise,

and it is generally easy to correct and amend what it is very difficult to originate. I have written to this effect to the Archbishop of Canterbury. He is to have a meeting of the bishops on the subject on Easter Tuesday, and we have agreed to assemble here early in the week after, in order that the bill may be in a state to be presented as soon as possible after Parliament meets.

I sent a copy of the amended bill to Lord Grenville, who has returned it with a great many marginal notes, which I shall look over in a day or two. I shall be glad to know what are likely to be your movements, and I most sincerely hope to hear that you have received benefit from the waters.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

In accordance with the intention that we see expressed in this letter, he lost no time in procuring the consent of the Lords also to the measure, moving the second reading of the bill himself, in a speech which explained its objects with great perspicuity, giving an outline of the manner in which it was intended to carry them into effect, and with characteristic candour and boldness not shrinking from advancing some arguments, bearing on the position of the Dissenters, which he knew would be displeasing to a portion of his audience, but which, since they had weight in his own mind, he felt himself bound not to suppress. He took the whole responsibility of the proposal on himself. While he avowed that "he felt that he was proposing the most important measure which he had ever submitted to their Lordships' consideration," he affirmed it also to be "the result of his own investigations, and of the deliberations of those whom he thought it his duty to consult." Its importance was of course measured by the magnitude of the evil which it was calculated to remedy. And his first efforts were directed to combat the arguments of those who whispered that this evil, namely, the disparity between the accommodation afforded by the existing churches and the population of the kingdom, was

too great to be remedied ; that any measure such as the present for its relief would be but as a drop of water in the sea. "Even," said Lord Liverpool, "were this true to the extent to which it had been stated, or true in any considerable degree, it would still be possible to do a great deal of good, and there could be no reason for not attempting all the good which could possibly be done. The present measure might not come up to the wishes of every man, but it would effect a great deal ; and would, in its results, have the most beneficial effects on the religion, morality, and general instruction of the country. The opinion of its inadequacy originated in the notion that church accommodation ought to be provided for the whole people. But when the number of those who were too young, of those who were too old, of the sick, and of those who must of necessity be left at home to take care of houses was taken into calculation, it was evident that not more than a third of the population could attend divine service at the same time. He might have added the Dissenters, but as the object of the measure was to lessen or to remove Dissent he did not wish to dwell on the farther deduction which might be made on that ground. Nor, again, did he expect that the means of providing increased accommodation would be limited to the grant which he had recommended. He anticipated that it would act as a great stimulus to private liberality ; and one of the objects embraced in the bill authorised the commissioners, who are to be appointed under it, to receive subscriptions in aid of the grant. He estimated that the money now to be voted would afford the means of building 100 churches without any aid from subscriptions. But he expected subscriptions to an amount which would double that number ; and he quoted the example of Liverpool, where six churches had recently been built by money thus collected from voluntary donors." Finally he pressed the passing of the bill on the Lords as a clear and positive duty. "He was sure that he expressed feelings in which

every one who heard him participated, when he said that it was a duty paramount to every other to support religion, and in particular that established by law, which, without disparagement to any other, he believed to be the most pure. Even in a political point of view there were many considerations which would alone be sufficient to recommend this measure. The recent increase of population had taken place chiefly in the manufacturing towns; and it was impossible that great masses of human beings should be brought together in the manner in which they were situated in these towns without being exposed to vicious habits, and to corrupting influences dangerous to the public security as well as to private morality. Doubts, it was well known, had at first been expressed as to the adequacy and propriety of the educational measures which had recently been adopted for the benefit of the poor. Those doubts had been dissipated by the undeniable results of the system. For himself, he had always been of opinion that the benefit of instruction ought to be extended to all classes of his Majesty's subjects, and he had always viewed with great satisfaction the subscriptions which had been contributed for that object. But their Lordships must perceive in this an additional inducement to direct the education which was thus diffused into a proper course. It was their duty to take care that those who received the benefits of education should not be obliged to resort to Dissenting places of worship by finding the doors of the church shut against them."

On a subsequent occasion, when the bill was in committee, he further expressed his own opinion on the much-vexed question of church adornment and decoration. One of the clauses of the bill enjoined the commissioners who were to be appointed to direct their whole attention to taking care that the churches to be erected should be so built as to afford the greatest possible accommodation to the largest number of persons; and Lord Grenville, in commenting on the phraseology of the clause, took occasion to explain

that "whilst he deprecated all useless splendour in the building of churches, he thought it of importance that that mode should be adopted which was best calculated to inspire devotion, and which was characteristic of the Established Church; that there should be a decent decoration." Lord Liverpool expressed his entire agreement with this view of the principle which was to be laid down. "He was," he said, "decidedly of opinion that though the providing the greatest possible accommodation for the largest number of persons ought to be a leading principle, and though he was wholly and completely adverse to incurring a heavy expense for mere splendour, yet there ought to be that decent decoration which would mark the character of the Established Church; and so far as he himself might have any share in the execution of the Act he should certainly so interpret it."

So explained, the bill met with an assent which may be described as unanimous. On the second reading, Lord Holland indulged in one or two sneers, though they were aimed rather at the Prime Minister's speech than at the measure itself. "He certainly did wonder that a minister, who had restrained the prerogative of the heir to the crown" (even now he could not refrain from endeavouring to revive the Regent's dissatisfaction with the restrictions originally imposed on his authority, and consequently with those who had imposed them), "who had called on the country to grant sums unprecedented in amount, who had suspended the liberties of the people, he did wonder that a minister who had been engaged in such transactions should esteem the building of a few churches a measure of such paramount importance." And in reply to the hope which Lord Liverpool had expressed that the measure would tend to abate Dissent, he declared his opinion to be that "Dissent was no evil, and he hoped he should never see it extinguished."

And again, in committee, he differed from Lord Liverpool and Lord Grenville on the "ornamental architecture"

which those noble Lords contemplated, and declared that "under the peculiar circumstances of this bill he should object to any superfluity which was likely to create an occasion for calling for further sacrifices from the public." But even he did not offer any actual opposition to the bill, and its results have fully indicated Lord Liverpool's estimate of its importance. The million of money which was voted by Parliament was, of course, soon spent, but the stimulus which, as he correctly anticipated, the public grant would give to private subscriptions was no evanescent impulse. They flowed in with that magnificent liberality which Englishmen have always displayed on every kind of emergency ; and as the continued increase of population more than kept up with all the efforts of the commissioners they still continued to pour in, and the work of building churches was still carried on with unabated energy. Half a century has now elapsed since Lord Liverpool made his timely appeal to Parliament and the country ; for the hundred churches which he expected to provide, thousands have been erected, and the subscriptions which are yearly collected are now greater than at any former period. Probably no week passes by in which some new church, built under the provisions of this Act, is not dedicated to the services of religion ; and the merit of having conceived a scheme of action which has produced such admirable and beneficial results, of having been the first to give the feelings of the nation so ennobling and desirable an impulse, belongs almost exclusively to Lord Liverpool.

On some other questions which were discussed during the session, the opinions which he expressed were entirely in accordance with the course of subsequent legislation. Neither House produced a warmer supporter of Sir Robert Peel's bill designed to regulate and restrict the employment of children in the cotton factories. At the present day it seems almost incredible that children should have usually entered on such labour at the age of seven, should have often been employed at the age of five ; that their ordinary

labour should have been fifteen hours a day, which were not rarely extended to seventeen ; and absolutely impossible that such a system should have failed to be utterly destructive of health and strength. One single fact mentioned by Sir Robert was sufficient to show how pernicious it was to the rising generation of the district in which it prevailed. As he stated to the House of Commons when he introduced the bill, "They were prevented from growing to their full size ; and in consequence Manchester, which was used to furnish numerous recruits for the army, was now wholly unproductive in that respect." Some opponents of the bill desired to hear counsel and receive evidence in opposition to it ; others professed to resist it on general principles, as an interference with the rights of free labour ; but Lord Liverpool justly declared that neither eloquence nor testimony could induce him to believe that children of such an age as had been described, or even two years older, could labour for even twelve hours a day without injury. And with at least equal justice did he dismiss as puerile the idea that a child of six or seven years old was a free labourer, or could in any sense of the word be considered a free agent. He was equally inclined to favour a reform of the game laws, and to facilitate the sale of game ; a measure which, though it has not extinguished poaching, has beyond all doubt very greatly diminished it.

On the whole, the session of Parliament proved so comparatively unimportant that it may be said that next to the Church Building bill the most interesting transactions which came under its notice were the marriages of those royal princes who had hitherto remained single. The singular position in which (as has been already mentioned) the death of the Princess Charlotte had left the Royal Family, naturally led the younger members of it to think of matrimony, and Parliament was called on to make an increased provision for the Duke of Clarence, the Duke of Kent, and the Duke of Cambridge ; every one of whom was married in the course of the year to a princess of his choice. The



marriages were happier than those which had been contracted by their elder brothers. All the princes became fathers in the course of the next year; and though the children of the Duke of Clarence died in their infancy, those of his brothers survived, the daughter of the Duke of Kent eventually succeeding to the throne, which seemed thus destined to be occupied by a queen; while the son of the youngest brother commands his cousin's army with a diligent care, an impartial judgment and firmness, which afford an admirable example to all that there is no rank so high as to be exempt from the duty of labour, or as not to derive increased dignity from well-directed industry.

A singular case came before Lord Liverpool in the course of the autumn, when Colonel Berkeley, being engaged in a lawsuit to prove his legitimacy, and believing or pretending to believe that the Regent could give evidence in his favour, applied to his Royal Highness to appear as a witness. The Crown lawyers were unanimous in their opinion that a Prince invested with the office which he filled could not do so. Their view was stoutly contested by the colonel's legal advisers, among whom was Sir Samuel Romilly; but the attorney and solicitor-general adhered to their opinion, and the precedent laid down is so important that it may be as well to subjoin the argument by which they supported it.

We have read with great attention the remarks made by Colonel Berkeley's counsel on our opinion upon the important and delicate question whether his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, whilst in the exercise of the royal authority, can give evidence in a civil suit between two of his Majesty's subjects, and, after a very anxious reconsideration of this subject, we retain the opinion we have already expressed.

As to the first point noticed in those remarks, we still think that his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, whilst exercising the royal authority under the statutes of the 51st and 52d of the King, stands in the same situation as the King with regard to the giving testimony in a court of justice, since it appears to us that the spirit and object of those Acts were to confer

upon his Royal Highness the royal character, subject to such restrictions only as are expressly contained in those Acts, and therefore our opinion is, that if by reason of his royal character the King cannot give such testimony, neither can the Prince Regent do so whilst exercising the royal functions.

It is supposed, however, that this is not a legitimate conclusion, and that, although some of the consequences flowing from the royal character attach to the Prince Regent, (such as not being amenable to process, nor responsible for the evidence given), yet that the power and competence to give evidence possessed by his Royal Highness before those Acts remain, and are not affected thereby. At the same time, however, it is thought that his Royal Highness has, since those Acts, the privilege of communicating his evidence in a peculiar mode, viz. by certificate under the Sign Manual or Great Seal. But if his power and competence to give evidence as a witness remain as before those Acts, we cannot discover from whence this last privilege is derived, nor why his Royal Highness is not to be examined personally upon oath like any other witness. The only reason assigned for this supposed privilege is, that the King is so entitled to give his evidence (which is at once assuming the next point to be considered, viz. the King's capacity to give evidence), whereas in this part of the argument Colonel Berkeley's counsel are endeavouring to maintain that, though the King cannot give evidence, yet that the Prince Regent may; but if this be the state of the law, then there is no authority whatever for saying that the Prince Regent is to be permitted to give his evidence in any other mode than that in which other persons are to be examined.

There is also another objection to his evidence being given under the Sign Manual or the Great Seal; that all instruments under the one or the other must, we apprehend, in point of form, be in the name and on the behalf of the King, which would manifestly be incongruous when the evidence certified is not that of the King, but of the Regent himself.

As to the circumstance of his Royal Highness having joined in proving the will of his Serene Highness the Duke of Brunswick, although we do not see its application to the present question, yet we cannot but think that he ought not so to have

joined, but that he should either have left it to the other executors, or have appointed some other persons to act for him, as the King, if appointed executor, would have done. See 4 inst. 355.

2d. The next question is, whether the King can give evidence orally or in any other manner in a civil suit. That he is not compellable to do so, that he cannot be sworn (there being no power capable of administering an oath to him in a court of justice), that, whether his testimony be given *vivâ voce* or otherwise, no question either in chief or on cross-examination can be proposed to him, are either expressly or by inference admitted in the remarks of Colonel Berkeley's counsel; and that his testimony must be conclusive as to the facts stated by him, appears to us necessarily to follow from the perfection ascribed by the law to his royal character. Now for such remarkable exceptions from the case of all other witnesses we cannot but think that strong and decisive authority ought to be produced, and that the silence of text writers upon the subject, so far from being favorable to the notion that the King can give evidence, appears to us to afford a directly contrary inference, since we should have expected them to have adverted to such remarkable singularities in the case of the King if they exist, and to have clearly and plainly pointed out the mode and manner in which his testimony ought to be given and received.

It is said, however, that not only the text writers upon evidence are silent as to this alleged disability of the King to give evidence, but that some writers who have incidentally treated upon this subject have had occasion to state the competency of the King to give evidence in particular cases, and how that evidence in other cases is to be given.

The only writer referred to in support of this proposition is Sir William Hale, who, after stating that the King cannot give evidence that a man indicted of high treason is guilty, goes on in another passage to say, "Yet in some cases the King's testimony, under the great seal, is allowable as an *essoine de servitio Regis*." The learned judge has only stated this one instance to elucidate his position, but this is not one in which evidence is given by the King, but one in which he issues (by his prerogative) a writ commanding the justices of his court to allow an

*essoine* to a party for a certain cause recited and asserted to exist in such a writ, which we apprehend bears no similitude whatever to the evidence required by facts necessary to be proved for the determination of the cause. And with respect to the two cases which we referred to in our opinion, and which are now brought forward as authorities on the part of Colonel Berkeley, we still think that they cannot be relied on, having passed without discussion, and their authority having been questioned by Rolle in the passage cited by us in our former opinion, and also in the case of *Omichund v. Barker*, in Willes' Rep. 550, in which Lord Chief Justice Willes says, "that the certificate of the King, under his sign manual, of a fact (except in an old case in Chancery, Hob. 213,) has been always refused."

We cannot, therefore, think that the authorities referred to are sufficient to maintain the proposition, and the principles of the law of evidence we think are decisively against it.

It is admitted as a general rule that evidence must be given upon oath, and we are not aware of any exception to it in the case of *living* witnesses.

It is true that in cases of pedigree and custom, evidence of what persons who are dead have said, though not upon oath, is admissible, and that the declarations of dying persons are in some cases received. In the former, however, the general rule of evidence has been varied from, on account of the possibility of producing the testimony of living witnesses to matters of ancient date, and originating in remote periods; and in the latter the situation of the party is supposed to operate upon his mind equally with the obligation of an oath.

It is also true that there are cases in which the testimony of witnesses is admitted where they are not amenable for such testimony, as where they are out of the jurisdiction of the court, or are dead before their testimony is used; but this arises, not from any privilege given by the law, but from accidental circumstances.

As to the case put by Colonel Berkeley's counsel, of an ambassador, admitting that he could not be here indicted for perjury (which is by no means clear), yet, we apprehend, the case of such perjury being established, it would furnish a reason for

sending him back to his own court, there to be punished, if by the law of his own country he could, and at all events disgraced by the dismissal.

But it is to be observed in all these cases of exception to the general rules of evidence, the truth of the facts referred to may be controverted.

The matter to which the hearsay evidence applies, the facts stated in the dying declarations, or by persons who are not within the reach of the process of English courts, or by the ambassador, may be disputed, rebutted, and contradicted by other evidence ; in all such cases the testimony may be falsified, and the jury of the court who are to decide the cause may determine that what has been stated in these various instances is false ; whereas, in the case of testimony given by the King, or by his Royal Highness whilst exercising the royal authority, it is admitted that what may be stated by them cannot be questioned, cannot be rebutted by contradiction, refuted by argument, nor decided to be either mistaken or unfounded.

Upon the whole, therefore, we adhere to the opinion we had originally formed, and which we beg leave to re-state, namely, That his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, whilst in the personal exercise of the royal authority, is in the situation of the King in this respect, and that the King cannot by any mode give evidence as a witness in a civil suit.

S. SHEPHERD.

R. GIFFORD.

29th January, 1819.

The letter, too, in which Lord Liverpool had invited their opinion is equally worth preserving, as a proof both of the clearness of apprehension with which he grappled with a legal question, and of the largeness of view with which he elevated the subtle technicalities of law, and enlarged them so as to embrace or illustrate the general principles of State policy :

*Private.*

Fife House, 26th August, 1818.

MY DEAR SIR,

The following observations are only intended for your perusal and that of the Solicitor-General.

I do not feel that I have any right, or that I am competent to form a decided opinion on the subject to which they relate, but I thought I might as well lay before you the ideas which had suggested themselves to my mind on reading the opinion transmitted by Colonel Berkeley. You will give them no more weight than they may appear on consideration to deserve.

The question divides itself into two parts: first, whether the Prince Regent stands exactly in the same predicament as the King would stand if he were in the full exercise of his power.

Secondly, whether the King is a competent witness in a court of law or equity.

Upon the first point, I own I should have had no doubt. Whatever may be the force of any particular expression, the whole spirit and policy of the Regency Act is to place the Regent, as long as he is exercising the functions of royalty in the name of the King, in the same situation as the King, except where any special limitations are distinctly enacted. The perfectibility and irresponsibility of the royal character which applies to the King must apply equally to the Regent, and every protection with which the law has thought it necessary to cover the King must be considered as afforded to his Royal Highness.

The case of the probate to the Duke of Brunswick's will is ingeniously put, but I have no difficulty in stating that, if the King could not have proved that will, the Regent could not, and ought not to have done it, and it was in such case an oversight permitting him to do it.

Upon the second question, as to the situation of the King, I confess I feel greater difficulties, and much less competency to give an opinion.

I understand the opinion of Colonel Berkeley's advisers to be that the King is not compellable to give evidence, but that he is competent to do so if he thinks proper.

This competency must apply, not only to his testimony generally, but likewise to the manner and degree in which he may think

fit to give it. For example, he would be warranted in giving his testimony, and in refusing afterwards to be cross-examined. He would be warranted in refusing to answer particular questions. It cannot be said that there would be any power to compel him to tell the *whole* truth if there was no power to compel him to tell the truth.

In short, a partial and a garbled evidence might be taken to the advantage of one party and to the prejudice of the other.

The exceptions to the general rule, stated in the opinion, are certainly deserving of serious consideration, and it has occurred to me that a question might arise whether the testimony in such case might not depend upon its being received with the consent of both parties.

This would do away the possible injustice of its being partial and qualified, because the party who consented to receive it as such could not have any right to complain.

On the other hand, would it not be putting the Sovereign of the country in a strange and extraordinary situation, to say that the competency of his testimony depended upon the consent of both parties in a cause to receive it? That this testimony should be incompetent from the nature of his situation, and the general analogy of law, is intelligible, but to say that the competency depends upon the will of the subject appears most objectionable.

I have thus thrown out what has occurred to me upon first reading the opinion. It is certainly a question of very great importance and delicacy, and well deserving to be probed to the bottom.

Believe me, &c.

To the ATTORNEY-GENERAL.

LIVERPOOL.

Meanwhile, another good harvest was adding to the prosperity of the country. But, as the Prime Minister's cares were thus being lightened in one quarter, the very absence of anxiety and of danger from without began to create for him fresh causes of solicitude within the Cabinet itself. Great as the value of Canning's accession to the Ministry had been, it had awakened jealousies and heart-burnings among some of his colleagues. Especially the

conduct of Peel, or Peel's friends, was believed by some persons to indicate the existence of a secret ill-feeling towards him. Above a year before, a report had reached Ireland that it was intended to raise him to the peerage in that country ; and Peel had written to Lord Liverpool that Lord Whitworth (the Lord Lieutenant) disapproved of his conduct and policy so much that it would hardly be possible to induce him to sign the necessary warrant. And now a letter from Mr. Arbuthnot to Lord Liverpool warns him "that we must watch our own people, and take good care that there is no treachery within ourselves. He had always known that Croker, Fitzgerald, and others were crying out for Peel's advancement with a view to their own benefit. . . . He had great confidence in Peel's good sense ; but there were several who were constantly at work upon him, and there was much to be apprehended when constant stimulants are applied to any person's vanity." Canning himself, the same authority reported, "seemed out of heart." It was no slight addition to the ordinary labours of a minister to have to compose such feelings of jealousy and irritation which disturbed the proper cordiality of his colleagues ; but the skill and success with which Lord Liverpool undertook it may be judged of by the general unanimity with which the two ministers chiefly concerned subsequently worked together ; while the difficulty of the task may be equally seen in the circumstance that the moment that his controlling hand was removed the jealousies revived ; and Peel, with the majority of Lord Liverpool's colleagues, preferred driving Canning to seek that support from the Whigs which every consideration of justice, consistency, and admiration for pre-eminence of talent and seniority of service ought to have made themselves eager to afford him.

For the moment, Lord Liverpool not only succeeded in pacifying the discontent of his subordinate colleagues, but in obtaining the co-operation of a new colleague of pre-eminent reputation. The Duke of Wellington was, as we



have seen, on the point of returning to England; and his services had been so unprecedented that it was conceived that it would be a not improper compliment and recognition of them to invite him to take a seat in the Cabinet, while it was also far from improbable that military questions might arise from time to time on which his judgment and aid would be of the highest value to the Administration. As there was no vacant office, Lord Liverpool's first design was that he should join the Ministry without one; but this plan, since the Duke had not previously belonged to it, was not without objection, and Lord Mulgrave, the Master-General of the Ordnance, with great liberality and disinterestedness, offered to yield that post to him. The proposal was accepted with thankfulness by Lord Liverpool, and the office by the Duke. The following letter from the latter is curious, as showing the ideas of the obligations of party ties which he adopted as his rule on this his return to political life in England; looking on himself, as he said many years before, as "one who had eaten the King's salt," and who was therefore generally bound as far as possible to support any Administration to which the King might think fit to entrust the conduct of affairs. Whether he fully carried out his principle, when another of the statesmen with whom he now associated himself became Prime Minister, may be thought questionable; but Lord Liverpool himself, as his answer shows, considered that the Duke did stand in some respects in a peculiar position, and was entitled to make such a stipulation.

Aix la Chapelle, 1st November, 1818.

MY DEAR LORD,

I received upon my return here your lordship's letter of the 23d of October, and I beg you to assure his Royal Highness the Prince Regent of my gratitude to his Royal Highness for offering me the office of Master-General of the Ordnance upon Lord Mulgrave's resignation. I am likewise much obliged to your lordship for recommending me to his Royal Highness's attention upon this occasion.

I certainly would have wished, for many reasons, that this arrangement could have been delayed for some time; but, as the delay appears to be not only inconvenient to the Government, but disagreeable to Lord Mulgrave, I shall make no objection to the appointment taking place whenever the Government may think proper.

I don't doubt that the party of which the present Government are the head will give me credit for being sincerely attached to them and to their interests; but I hope that, in case any circumstance should occur to remove them from power, they will allow me to consider myself at liberty to take any line I may at the time think proper. The experience which I have acquired during my long service abroad has convinced me that a factious opposition to the Government is highly injurious to the interests of the country; and, thinking as I do now, I could not become a party to such an opposition, and I wish that this may be clearly understood by those persons with whom I am now about to engage as a colleague in Government.

I can easily conceive that this feeling of mine may, in the opinion of some, render me less eligible as a colleague, and I beg that, if this should be the case, the offer you have so kindly made to me may be considered as not made; and I can only assure you that you will ever find me equally disposed, as you have always found me, to render you every service and assistance in my power.

Believe me, &c.

WELLINGTON.

*To the* EARL OF LIVERPOOL.

Fife House, 9th November, 1818.

MY DEAR DUKE,

I have received your answer to my letter of the 23d of October, and I will not fail to assure the Prince Regent of your grateful feelings, in consequence of the intention which his Royal Highness has been pleased to announce to you of appointing you Master-General of the Ordnance.

I should certainly not think of proposing to any person to become a member of the Government upon any condition or

understanding that he was necessarily to adopt the course of conduct which the party of which the Government was composed might be inclined to pursue, in the event of their being removed from office ; but, strongly as I should be impressed with this sentiment with respect to any other individual, I feel it more peculiarly in your case, as it is impossible not to be sensible that there are many special circumstances in your situation which render it of the utmost importance, in the event to which you refer, that you should be at full liberty to adopt that line of conduct which you may at that time judge most proper and advisable, with a view to the country and to yourself.

LIVERPOOL.

Throughout the autumn the Queen had been lingering on a sick bed, and in the middle of November she died. The improbability of her recovery had caused the ministers to make some trifling but necessary alteration in the Regency Act, and at the beginning of 1819 compelled them to introduce a fresh bill to provide for the guardianship of the King's person, which was entrusted to the Duke of York. But such a measure was not likely to provoke any dispute, and the minister, when he fixed the meeting of Parliament for the middle of January, anticipated another year as prosperous and tranquil as the last.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

Great reduction of taxation that had taken place—Memorandum by Mr. Huskisson—Postponement of the resumption of cash payments—Lord Liverpool's speech—Restoration of Java to the Dutch—Lord Liverpool's doctrine on the subject of acquisitions by conquest—Sir James Mackintosh moves for a Committee on the Criminal Law—Mr. Tierney's motion for a Committee on the state of the nation defeated by a large majority—The Regent consults the Cabinet about a divorce—Lord Liverpool checks the Regent's desire for costly building—Agitation for Reform—The rise of the term "Radical"—Military drilling in the manufacturing districts—Riot at Manchester—Letter from Lord Liverpool—Variety of proposals for the restoration of tranquillity—Lord Grenville's correspondence with Lord Liverpool, and support of the Ministry—Distress in the west of Scotland—Winter meeting of Parliament—Defeat of attacks on the Ministry—The Six Acts—Lord Liverpool's speeches in the House of Lords—Wisdom of our Government in abstaining from legislative interference with the details and operations of trade—Death of George III.—His character—Glories of his reign.

THE expectation of tranquillity was shared by the Opposition. For, the Prince Regent's speech having congratulated Parliament on the "most flourishing condition of the trade, commerce, and manufactures of the country;" and generally "on the favorable change which had so rapidly taken place in the internal circumstances of the United Kingdom; Lord Lansdowne, in commenting on the Address, bore his testimony to "the revival of commerce and industry." And his speech was not more remarkable for the admissions which it thus contained, than for a statement which it elicited from the Prime Minister. For, in

answer to an admonition to which Lord Lansdowne also gave utterance, that this increasing prosperity in no degree diminished the necessity of economy; of reductions in the expenditure, that an alleviation of the burdens of the people might be practicable, Lord Liverpool reminded the House that, though in general "it had not been common for any taxes to be abolished during the first years of peace, nevertheless, since the commencement of the existing peace, the enormous sum of seventeen millions and a half had been remitted." And he not obscurely intimated his continued adherence to the opinion which he had expressed, when some of the taxes which had been repealed were under consideration, that it might well be questioned whether, "while the public debt was so great, such a reduction had been altogether politic." Lord Lansdowne had made some observations also on the currency, especially complaining of the scarcity of the precious metals which still prevailed in the country, and pressing the question whether the ministers still intended to allow the Act which restrained the Bank from cash payments to expire in the course of the summer; and Lord Liverpool, in reply, had repeated the assertion which he had made on more than one previous occasion, of his anxiety to see "our currency restored to coin," and his conviction that our "currency could not be restored to a sound state till that wish were realized." But he admitted that he feared that, "considering the present state of the exchanges, and the progress of the pecuniary operations in foreign loans, he thought it impossible to resume cash payments so early as the approaching summer." While he was considering the subject, and conferring on it with the Governor of the Bank and others who had made it their study, the following paper was laid before him by Mr. Huskisson, at that time First Commissioner of the Land Revenue; which was rather embodying the conversations which the writer had already held with him, than presenting any of the topics it contains in a new light:

4th February, 1819.

The resumption of the cash payments must be preceded by the accomplishment of the following desiderata.

1st. The foreign exchanges in favour of this country, or at least restored to par.

This can only be effected by a gradual drawing in of our circulation (Bank of Country paper), aided by the diminishing influence of those events connected with the money-markets abroad, which there is reason to believe would at this period have reduced our circulation below its ordinary level, if the Bank had been paying in cash, and by consequence been under the necessity of counteracting by a diminution of its issues the drain which would have been occasioned by those events.

This first point to be attended to suggests the following query. Could this gradual diminution of circulation (supposing the other desiderata to be accomplished) be effected within twelve months; and may it not be expected that the influence of those foreign causes of depression, which are not under our control, will have nearly subsided by the expiration of that period?

2dly. That the Bank should make a large provision of bullion.

I apprehend that it will be necessary to put a stop to the circulation of the small notes (under 5*l*.) of the Bank of England, leaving those of the country banks at least for some time longer. For the purchase of bullion the Bank must submit to a sacrifice, not regarding the immediate price, though it will always be in its power to lower that price by the gradual diminution of its issues.

3dly. That the debt from Government to the Bank should be diminished (say to fifteen millions), in order to enable it to make these purchases of bullion consistently with a gradual diminution of its circulation, and without contracting its mercantile discounts.

4thly. A great diminution of the unfunded debt, not held by the Bank. I do not think it will be safe to have more than fifteen, and certainly not more than twenty millions in the market. If the exchequer bills should be paid into the receipt of the revenue, the Government would be driven to the necessity of

asking fresh advances from the Bank, which would derange the whole plan. On other public grounds I think the unfunded debt ought to be diminished.

If gold is to be our only standard, and only legal tender to any amount, I should adhere to my suggestion of paying in bullion all sums above 25*l.* at the present standard price ; of taking a brassage upon the gold coinage which would raise its value in currency to 4*l.* the ounce, and to a reduction of the amount at which silver should be a legal tender to twenty shillings.

If silver is to be our only standard (we cannot have two) and unlimited tender to any amount (leaving gold to fluctuate according to the relative value of the two metals in the market), I should retain the present seignorage upon the silver coin, making all sums of 5*l.* and upwards (the lowest denomination of Bank-note) payable if demanded in silver bullion, at the old standard of 5*s.* 2*d.* per ounce.

Of these two plans I should prefer the former, but either would be consistent with good faith. All others, whether for an indefinite destruction (the result most to be dreaded if we do not now make an effort) or for an alteration of the currency, are founded in delusion, and being the first, would only pave the way for successive acts of fraud and bankruptcy.

To accomplish the above desiderata, a financial effort must be made this year. It will one day or another become unavoidable, and upon a comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of postponement, I think the latter preponderate, even independent of the removal of the restriction, to which I consider this effort to be an almost indispensable preparation.

The mystery of our financial system no longer deceives anyone in the money-market ; selling exchequer bills daily to redeem funded debt daily, then funding those exchequer bills once a year, or once in two years, in order to go over the same ground again ; whilst the very air of mystery, and the anomaly of large annual or biennial loans in times of profound peace, create uneasiness out of the market, and in foreign countries an impression unfavorable with respect to the solidity of our resources. I think I have seen some symptoms which induce me to apprehend that this impression has already been made

in some degree in the political circles and money-markets of the Continent.

In finance, expedients and ingenious devices may answer to meet temporary difficulties ; but for a permanent and peace system, the only wise course either in policy or for impression is a system of simplicity and truth.

This course must be coupled with our other arrangements for the resumption of cash payments, or it is my conscientious belief that we shall either fail in attaining the object, or, if attained, in adhering to it. Whatever surplus of revenue we possess must be our real sinking-fund. The growth of the revenue, and the interest of the debt *really* diminished, will improve that sinking-fund year after year whilst peace continues. Should it require further improvement, I am sure that we should find in Parliament and the country a better disposition to submit to any moderate sacrifice for that purpose than we can possibly expect so long as the present system is persevered in. Our sinking-fund (it is the only fund deserving of such a name) would then be whatever surplus of revenue the country can afford without too much pressure ; and, be its amount great or small, it will do more for the real reduction of debt, for the real stability of public credit, for the character of England abroad, and the strength and ease of Government at home, than ever can be hoped for by continuing in a system which has all the inconveniences without any of the advantages of concealment, and is liable to all the derangement and expense incidental to complicated machinery, without producing any beneficial result, even whilst its movements meet with no interruption.

In accordance with the views expressed in this memorandum, the ministers once more submitted the question to committees of both Houses ; and, when they had made their report, the decision which Lord Liverpool and his colleagues adopted was to provide for a gradual resumption of cash payments. At first, from February in the ensuing year, the Bank was only to be compelled to pay comparatively large sums (above 230*l.*) in gold bullion, and the gold was to be taken at the value of 4*l.* 1*s.* an ounce ; that



value was gradually to be lowered till, in May 1822, it should be taken to be 3*l.* 17*s.* 10½*d.* (a value which is still maintained); and at the expiration of another year, in May 1823, the Bank should be bound to exchange all its notes for gold on demand. As the arrangement involved no grant of money, the resolutions on which a bill to sanction these arrangements was to be founded were introduced first in the House of Lords by Lord Harrowby because he had been the chairman of the Lords' committee. But he confined himself to a brief statement of the object which it was desired to attain, and left the task of recommending the measure, and explaining the reasons which had led to its adoption, to his friend and leader.

The eminent writer of the history, not of this country only, but of Europe during the first half of the present century, has recorded his belief that the Act which was now passed was the beginning and cause of "a series of embarrassments natural and social, financial and political, which have never yet been got over, and have imprinted lasting effects upon the fortunes of the British empire,"<sup>1</sup> and has even drawn an inference from the unanimity with which the resolutions were carried in both Houses, that the subject was "either not understood or not properly considered." Lord Liverpool's speech is alone a sufficient disproof of this suggestion. It bears throughout the marks of the most careful and minute investigation, and equally of that calm and keen perception which enables a man not only to disentangle perplexities and reconcile jarring or conflicting arguments, but to make the matters which he explains as intelligible to others as they have already become to himself. As soon as Lord Harrowby had laid his resolutions on the table, Lord Lauderdale met them with a set of counter resolutions, the general purport of them being that the Bank was able to have resumed cash payments two years before; while, on the other hand, there was no such "over-issue of paper" at

<sup>1</sup> Alison's History of Europe (Second Series, chap. iv. § 56, 79).

the moment as required to be diminished by immediate provision for a resumption of such payments; that silver would be a better standard of value than gold; and that, therefore, the first measure required was an alteration of our mint regulations. Lord Liverpool began by pointing out the mischiefs of any further delay in coming to a definitive settlement of the question; and, as he reiterated his conviction that the substitution of a paper for a metal currency was "a measure which could not be acted on as a general and permanent part of the system of this country," showed clearly that, if he continued to be minister, there could be but one kind of settlement of it. Those who opposed the resolutions he conceived in reality "to object to returning to cash payments at all." "The first question that suggested itself on looking at such an opinion was whether this system had ever been acted upon by any civilized country from the beginning of the world. Besides, he would ask how it must operate? They knew the disgraceful measures resorted to, even in this country, in former times, to depreciate the standard of value; but even that alternative, bad as it was, presented advantages not to be found in the rejection of a standard altogether. It was a change, an alteration, a debasement of the standard; but still it established something that was fixed in the room of something that was also fixed." He paid a well-deserved compliment to the integrity and disinterested patriotism that had generally actuated the Bank of England; but, at the same time, he pointed out the inevitable effect of releasing the Directors from the obligation to pay their notes in the precious metals. It would, in fact, be to invest them with the unrestrained power of making money: and "would Parliament," he asked, "consent to commit to their hands what it would certainly refuse to the Sovereign on the throne, controlled by Parliament itself, the power of making money without any other check or influence to direct them than

their own notions of profit and interest? Nothing could be more unwise than for Government to erect itself into a company of bankers; but it would be more reasonable for Government to take even that course, and issue its own notes, than to give such a power as he had described to any private corporation. This fact was unquestionable, at least, that no country in the world had ever established a currency without a fixed standard of value. The standard might be altered as their circumstances changed, as they became richer or poorer. It might be gold, it might be silver; it might be copper, or even iron; it might be anything which had a real value, though the metals had been preferred for this purpose by the general consent of all nations. But it could not be paper, which has no value, and is only promise of value."

He proceeded to deal with the argument that gold itself had not an unchangeable value, but one which, in fact, had varied greatly since the commencement of the war. He went back to the original engagement, any departure from which, he contended, "was not only objectionable as between the State and the individual, but must also operate on the engagements between every individual debtor and creditor in the country. It was impossible in either case to enter into calculations of individual loss or gain. Those who entered into the engagement did so at their own risk, and the State, having made or authorised the contract, was bound to see it fulfilled without reference to those who had benefited or who had lost. But was this practicable? He was prepared to show not only that it was practicable, but that no permanent inconvenience could arise from the adoption of the principle he recommended. In the three last years of the war, from the great military exertions which this country made, and the large subsidies it granted to other countries, gold rose to and remained at the average price of 5*l.* 4*s.* the ounce, being a rise of between 20 and 30 per cent. above the standard of the

country. When peace came the country had to retrace its steps, and to accomplish the reduction of the price of gold to its former state. In 1814 the exchanges became less unfavorable, and the price of gold was lowered. About the middle of 1816 the exchanges fell to par, and became soon after decidedly favorable to this country; gold fell to, and even below, the Mint price. With the experience of these facts before the country, it was absurd to talk of inconveniences and dangers attending a similar state of things; though there might be some inconvenience if it were proposed to return to cash payments within a certain number of months, and if it were in consequence necessary that the Bank should suddenly contract the existing circulating medium: but even now that inconvenience would be far less, when the difference between the actual and the Mint price of bullion was only about three per cent., than the country had to contend with when the difference was between 20 and 30 per cent. But it was the object of their Lordships' committee, while they were anxious to obtain the great desideratum of replacing the currency on its old and established principle, to do so in a manner the most gradual and the least likely to occasion even temporary inconvenience; in short, to adopt such means of attaining the end in view as might divest the question as much as possible of every rational objection that might otherwise be advanced.

"A noble earl had asked whether it was in the power of the Bank at any time to bring gold to the Mint price by contracting their issues of paper. He was aware that, although this was a most important branch of the question, it was one in which it was difficult to arrive at an unquestioned opinion. But he believed it would be found, on looking at the report of the committee, from the examination of practical men, that there was not a single individual even among those who were most hostile to the plan recommended by the committee,

and who entertained the greatest jealousy on the subject of the present inquiry, who did not admit the fact that a contraction of the Bank issues must necessarily have the effect of rendering the exchanges favorable to this country, and of lowering the price of bullion. The point alone on which any great difference of opinion existed on this part of the subject was the degree of inconvenience with which such a reduction of the existing circulating medium would be attended. Some thought the inconvenience would be considerable, others expected it to prove insignificant. For himself, he could never entertain a doubt that, if the circulating medium were gold, a reduction of the amount from fifty to thirty millions must increase its value, on the principle that the value of all property increased in proportion to the diminution of its amount: the same result must also take place with reference to a circulating medium of paper. In saying this, he must be understood, however, as admitting that other causes might operate in counter-acting such a reduction. What he maintained was the truth of the general principle that, whenever the quantity of any article was diminished, *pro tanto* its value was increased.

“He would now proceed to the consideration of the plan proposed to be adopted for eventually arriving at cash payments. If it were admitted that the resumption of cash payments was desirable, the question to determine was whether it could be accomplished by any course more gradual and therefore less injurious. The advantages of the present plan appeared to him to be these: If Parliament were to call on the Bank to pay in cash, that is in specie, at any given time, the Bank must provide the necessary means for such payments by the prescribed time. He believed, and it was the belief of the Bank also, that if they were called on to pay cash to-morrow the demand would not be great for internal circulation. But still they must be provided not only with sufficient gold to meet the

chances of the exchanges actually being against them for a short time, but to supply also any farther demands for coin which fancy or caprice might suggest. The Bank therefore must, under such circumstances, be provided with a large treasure. But the advantage of the present plan was that the Bank might open with a much smaller amount of treasure than if they were obliged to commence their operations by the resumption of payments in coin.

"The next and most striking advantage of the proposed measure was that the Bank would begin to put it in operation upon a perfectly fair principle. Without recognising any permanent depreciation of the standard, the committee recommended them to arrest the evil where it was. They proceeded on the ground that, if bullion could not be issued at once at the recent price, it might in a short time be issued at that price, of 4*l.* 1*s.* per ounce, at which it was when the report was drawn up. To follow therefore the suggestion of the report would be to make an earlier beginning, from which gradually to work to the unrestrained payment in specie. This could not be done by means of coin without such a diminution of the intrinsic value of the coin as would be attended with great inconvenience; but with bullion, under the regulations recommended by the committee, it might be done without the same objections. The plain and intelligible principle of the proposition, therefore, was not to put off the opening of the Bank until it possessed such an abundance of coin as would meet all contingencies; but to begin at the existing market price of gold, arresting the evil where it was, and so gradually working to the desired consummation. If any doubt could arise on this point of the proposition, it appeared to him that it would be excited rather by the postponement of the period when the measure was to come into operation, and that some might be inclined to ask, 'Why postpone it so long? why not begin at once?' And the answer to such a question could only, he thought, be found in the two circumstances of the great repayments

that it appeared advisable to make of the advances from the Bank to the public, and of the necessity of a considerable loan, both of which would counteract the advantages which might otherwise result from commencing at once."

He proceeded to examine a point of great importance, on which a considerable diversity of opinion prevailed even among those who were agreed on other parts of the question: the relations existing between the Bank and the Government. "With respect," he said, "to the Bank advances, the Bank directors urged the indispensable necessity of their being repaid by Government. But, if the opinion which prevailed in a large part of the city of London on that subject could be accurately ascertained, he believed it would be found that the greatest jealousy existed on the subject of that repayment. He fairly confessed that, if there were to be no alteration of that system, he should consider that jealousy to be well-founded; for he believed there was no one who would not rather that the circulating medium of the Bank should be partly founded on Government security, respecting which there could be no partiality, or favour, or caprice, than that the whole of it should be issued on commercial discount. As, however, the bank was to be called on gradually to resume cash payments, the gradual repayment to the Bank of a portion of the advances made to the Government seemed to be a just proceeding. The advances of the Bank to the Government at this time amounted to twenty millions, and it would be seen by the evidence that the Bank had recently considered a reduction<sup>1</sup> to that amount to be sufficient. He himself thought that a repayment of five or six millions more would be all that the Bank had a right to expect, and if he had consented to repay ten, it was only to remove all pretence or excuse against the execution of the proposed plan at the earliest possible period. And if the repayment were gradual, as it was intended

<sup>1</sup> In 1815 the advances had been at one time as high as 35,000,000*l*.

that it should be, he was persuaded that no injurious effects would arise from it."

Adverting to the reduction of the issues of the Bank, he proceeded to say that "he did not believe that any such reduction would be necessary for the purpose of lowering the price of bullion, and so enabling the Bank to provide themselves with it in sufficient quantities. Even those who differed most from the committee on other parts of the subject, agreed that the continuation of the Bank issues at their present amount would be sufficient eventually to bring the exchanges in our favour. It formed no part of the proposed plan that the reduction of the Bank issues should be sudden. On the contrary, by pursuing the plan in contemplation, it would be so gradual as to occasion no inconvenience whatever to the trading community."

On such a question it was inevitable that considerations of personal interest would influence many individuals, and even classes. It might do so, even without their being conscious of selfish motives, from the over-estimate that each person is naturally led to form of the importance of his own occupation, and the inference which he consequently draws that what is beneficial to his class must be advantageous to the whole community. And Lord Liverpool proceeded to notice a way of regarding the question before the House which was the secret cause of much of the disfavour with which the Government proposal was viewed in some quarters. "It would be found to be the opinion of some of the witnesses examined by the committee that the commercial world would be always against the resumption of cash payments, as it would diminish the facility with which they at present obtained accommodation. There could be no doubt of the advantages which the existing system had produced during the war. It had enabled the country to make efforts to which its means could not otherwise have been equal. And he readily admitted that in peace also the same system afforded facilities to commerce which it would not otherwise enjoy.



While the Bank of England was not bound to pay its notes in cash, while it could regulate its issues merely by the convenience of the public, and by those issues accommodate at discretion merchants of sound capital, it would go greater lengths in doing so than it would venture to do if it were under the necessity of regulating its issues by the price of gold. A facility was thereby given to the mercantile world under the existing system which they would be extremely sorry to lose. He would go a step farther: the existing system appeared under certain circumstances to be favorable to the public at large. In the event of any distress the Bank could go on with its issues, so that those who would otherwise be poor should not be poorer, and distress might meet with relief. Undoubtedly this must frequently have the effect of mitigating evil, of obviating difficulty, and of diminishing temporary suffering. It must frequently give ease and facility to commercial transactions, and enable individuals engaged in those transactions to surmount obstacles which in the ordinary state of the circulation would be insuperable. But it was by no means an unmixed good. On the contrary, it was attended with great disadvantages. The consequence of it was too often an encouragement to speculation, to unsound dealings, to the accumulation of fictitious capital. So that though no one could deny that the existing system gave occasional and valuable facilities to trade, yet it was manifest that in the long run it tended to destroy that solid and secure foundation on which the commerce of a great nation ought to rest. To return to a currency of standard value might be in some degree to limit mercantile transactions, but it would place them on a firm and honorable basis. From the very beginning he had been of opinion that we could never get back to our ancient system of currency without temporary inconvenience. The only question was, whether it would be wise to adjourn the evil day. But even by the delay caused by the appointment of this committee to investigate this

subject some temporary inconvenience had been incurred ; and, if further proceedings were to be adjourned for a year longer, the same course must be recommenced, and the present, which would then be a gratuitous inconvenience, must be again submitted to."

One of the most valuable parts of his speech was perhaps that in which he went briefly into what may be called the history of the question, which necessarily opened a view of the general principles of a metal, a paper, and a mixed currency. "There was," he continued, "one point of great importance to which he wished more particularly to call their Lordships' attention, because he knew that it was one which had made a greater impression on the minds of some persons than any other circumstance. He meant the comparison of the circulating medium of the present day with that of former times. The argument, which at the first view was sufficiently captivating, he would endeavour to state in as strong a manner as he was able. It was assumed that the circulating medium at this time was not greater than it was in 1797, antecedent to the Bank restriction, and it was asked whether it was possible that the circulation could therefore be excessive, or even sufficient. Now he admitted that the whole circulating medium was not greater at present than in the year 1797, or even in the year 1792, before the war ; that the revenue had been augmented in the interval from sixteen millions to more than sixty millions ; that the commerce of the country had tripled or quadrupled ; that the agricultural and other transactions may have increased in equal proportions ; and yet it was possible that the same amount of circulating medium which existed at the first period might be sufficient at the last, or might even be excessive, though he did not say that it was excessive at the present moment. The whole fallacy of the argument to which he referred had arisen from not considering the great difference between a metallic and a paper circulation. Before the war the circulation (assuming it to have been fifty millions) con-

sisted of thirty millions of gold and about twenty millions of paper. It now consisted (independent of the silver coinage for small payments) of about fifty millions of paper. Previously to the close of the American war there were few country banks. They were confined to the great commercial towns and to some of the large cities. The country bank system grew up, in fact, between that period and the commencement of the succeeding war. Until this system had made considerable progress, the transactions throughout the country were in a great measure carried on by small hoards of money. Individuals received their rents in specie, and kept a considerable amount of specie by them to pay their bills as they came in. But by the extension of the banking system the habit of keeping specie is almost wholly done away. There is now scarcely such a thing as dead capital, except the small proportion which is kept in the respective banks. Besides, the power of paper, by its easy conveyance and transmission, enables a small amount of it to perform operations many times larger than an equal quantity of gold or silver can perform."

He proceeded to explain the Clearing House system recently adopted by the majority of the London bankers as one which showed in a most striking light the extent to which this facility of the transmission of paper money aided all commercial operations. And in one respect it may be said that none of the details into which he entered are more calculated to interest the political economist of the present day, or to prove the soundness of the system of cash payments, on which he was then insisting. He stated the payments which, on an average, were daily arranged in this manner, to amount to 4,700,000*l.*, and the money required to settle them to be about 220,000*l.* At the present day, not quite half a century from the time when he was speaking, the amount daily cleared averages twelve times that sum, and sometimes reaches seventy millions, while the money, whether coin or notes,

which actually changes hands, does not exceed a quarter of a million.

One fact which he mentioned would, on any inferior authority, have seemed almost incredible; that of the bank notes issued in 1818, nearly one-half (in value) consisted of notes of 1,000*l*. Such notes did not of course remain long in circulation. They remained out, on an average, 13 days, while 10*l*. notes were passed from hand to hand among the community for 137 days. And as this duration of their existence, as it might be called, was greatly shorter than it had been in 1792, when 1,000*l*. notes were out on an average 22 days, and 10*l*. notes 236 days, he considered that this circumstance, which showed "what an astonishing improvement there was in the means of accelerated circulation in the course of the last thirty years," proved also "how small a comparative proportion of currency might now be necessary compared with what was formerly required for the same purpose. These principles," he added, "might be applied still more extensively to the circulation of the country than to that of the metropolis. In the metropolis the transactions had been, for a century, carried on in a greater or less degree through the medium of paper, but in the country the paper circulation was, in a considerable measure, a recent creation, and the facilities for using it with economy were in a course of improvement from year to year.

"Upon a subject of this nature it was obviously impossible to fix any nice proportion; and, if he were asked what was the criterion of a circulation being sufficient or excessive, he must answer that it could be found only in its value when compared with the precious metals. Whether a paper circulation should continue for small payments, in combination with specie, was a question of expediency; but, if it was to continue, its real value could only be ascertained by its convertibility into specie." And he instanced the case of Lancashire, where bills of exchange were more extensively employed than in any other part of

the kingdom without the least inconvenience, as a proof "how little foundation there was for any alarm respecting an insufficiency of the circulating medium. Whatever temporary inconvenience or distress might arise from any sudden change, he was satisfied that where there was any real or substantial wealth in any country or district, that country or district would soon find a circulating medium for itself. The same spirit of enterprise and talent which, when directed to mechanics, had discovered the powers of the steam-engine and the spinning-wheel, would be found, and indeed already had been found, not less successful in devising means for circulating the property of the country in the most expeditious and profitable manner."

Finally, he recapitulated with the most perspicuous brevity the reasons which had influenced himself and his colleagues in proposing the resolutions to the House, and in framing the bill which was to be founded on them. "They were deeply anxious that the country should return to some fixed standard of value. They desired that it should be its ancient standard. They were wished to return to it with the least practicable delay, and with the least possible distress. The plan which they proposed would obtain this object by certain but progressive steps. It insured an early, though not an immediate commencement, and that at a standard which was in existence at the moment, while the steps which were to follow were all to be taken so gradually that the operation of the latter parts of the plan might take place almost insensibly, even if the precaution of some contraction in the circulation should be necessary for that purpose. His own persuasion was that no such contraction would be necessary; that most of, if not all the inconveniences which could arise, had been incurred already, and that, if Parliament would steadily adhere to the course recommended, they should see the ancient standard of the country re-established without material distress to any class of his Majesty's subjects."

The speech, from which I have thus given unusually

copious extracts, was accepted by those who heard it as so convincing that not a voice was raised against the plan which it advocated, with the exception of Lord Lauderdale's. And he was not very consistent in his opposition, for though in the earlier part of his comment on it he declared that the Bank might at once resume cash payments, before he sat down he asserted that an "alteration in the Mint regulations was a preliminary absolutely indispensable before it could do so." Other speakers, and they were nearly all habitual opponents of the Administration, Lord Grenville, Lord King, and Lord Lansdowne, were unanimous in their approval of the plan and in their compliments to the speech which had explained its objects and its expected operation. In the House of Commons, from the number of members engaged in commerce, who were probably influenced by the desire for occasional accommodation to which Lord Liverpool had alluded, the language held was not so unanimous; but even there the one or two dissentients who suggested amendments declined to press them to a division, and finally the resolutions were adopted with every appearance of universal consent. An additional proof of the sagacity with which the first steps of the measure had been contrived was subsequently furnished by the fact that the latter steps were found to be superfluous, and in 1821, two years before the new regulations required them to do so, the Bank, with the sanction of the Ministry, recommenced the system of cash payments, which, as far as human foresight can extend, is not likely to be again interrupted.

One brief discussion which took place in the same session, connected with that clause in the treaty of peace by which we had restored the great and most valuable island of Java to the Dutch, deserves a passing notice from the rule which Lord Liverpool took occasion to lay down respecting the acquisition of territory by conquest. After we had made ourselves masters of Java in 1811, we had obtained the adjacent island of Banca, by a treaty with the Sultan of Palembang, one of the eastern provinces of Sumatra; but

when we restored Java we also made over Banca to the King of the Netherlands in exchange for Cochin on the Malabar coast. The charge brought against the Administration by Lord Lansdowne was, that in so doing we had taken no care of the interests of our new ally the Sultan of Palembang, who, deprived of the protection which we had promised him, had been treated with wanton hostility by the Dutch on their return to Java. But it was plain that the real design was to call in question the policy of the cession of the larger island, which had been very ill-governed by the Dutch, but under our better management had proved to us a possession of great value. And Lord Liverpool, seeing that this was the real question at issue, defended the course which had been adopted, not by the consideration of the particular case, but on the general principle. He affirmed that Lord Lansdowne, and Lord Holland who had supported him, "had advanced a doctrine which militated against one of the clearest and most recognised laws of nations. That doctrine was that conquest gives sovereignty, and that by conquering the islands or colonies of our enemies we were entitled to consider them as our own in perpetuity. Now he would, on the contrary, maintain that the conquest of colonies gave us no right to consider them as appropriated, but that the sovereignty resided in the state from which they were conquered till their final cession by treaty after peace. All arrangements of such possessions, and all engagements entered into as administrators of them by the conquerors, could only be regarded as temporary and conditional, and might cease to be binding after their restoration unless specially provided for by particular treaties." There is no doubt that this was the principle on which we ourselves had always acted, and that in every instance in which, after a treaty of peace, we had retained acquisitions which we had made during the war which had preceded it, we had taken care to have the territory so retained formally ceded to us by its previous masters. But it might have been argued with some plausibility that the language of such

treaties favours the doctrine of Lord Lansdowne rather than that of the minister, since they invariably spoke of "restoring" conquests, while if the sovereignty of a territory, as Lord Liverpool argued, had never ceased "to reside in the State from which it had been conquered," the term "restoration" was superfluous and improper; the mere termination of a state of war terminated not our possession of the conquered territory, for that we had never had, but merely our occupation of it. However, in the House of Lords the ministers were too strong for any cavils even at their language to be often ventured on. In the House of Commons they seemed at first to have a less decided preponderance. When Sir James Mackintosh moved for a committee on the criminal laws, with the design of diminishing the frequency of capital punishments, Lord Castlereagh, who, while guarding himself and his colleagues against being supposed to disapprove of the object of the motion merely because they thought it unseasonable at the moment, moved the previous question, was defeated by a majority of 19, in a House of 280 members. And in a House of very similar numbers Lord Archibald Hamilton succeeded, by a majority of 5, in referring a petition from the royal burghs of Scotland praying for a reform in their constitution and Government, to another committee. And the result of these divisions made Lord Liverpool admit a momentary doubt whether he should be able to continue to carry on the Government with credit. In emphatic language he declared to one of his principal colleagues that he should consider it a personal disgrace to remain in office if he could not carry the measures which he considered the most calculated to benefit the country. Happily, however, these two little victories inspired the Opposition with hope even greater than the alarm which they had caused the Prime Minister. They encouraged the leader of the Opposition to bring forward a motion, which, though nominally only proposing a committee on the state of the country, was taken on both sides to be one which really invited the



House to express or deny its confidence in the Administration ; and the result was that a House of nearly 540 members affirmed, by a majority of more than two to one,<sup>1</sup> its unabated reliance on the general soundness of their ministerial policy.

Parliament was prorogued in the middle of July, but the tranquillity which had marked the early part of the year was so rudely disturbed before the end of the summer that the ministers were forced to reassemble it in the autumn ; and even before it was prorogued Lord Liverpool received solicitations from the Regent which were a foretaste of the great difficulty which almost overwhelmed the Government in the succeeding year. It is probable that the death of his daughter, which, as we have seen, had led so many of his brothers to marry, in the hope of becoming, if not kings themselves, at least the fathers of a line of kings, may have sharpened his own desire to be at liberty to form a fresh alliance. The conduct of the Princess his wife, which had recently been such as, even among the laxest natives of the Continent, to cause no slight scandal, seemed, in his eyes, calculated at once to justify such a wish and to facilitate its accomplishment. He had no doubt of her unfaithfulness, and resented such an injury as much as if he had given her no provocation for such error by his own neglect of her and his own open licentiousness. And under the influence of these feelings he now pressed the ministers to procure him a formal divorce ; a step which, as he insisted, they were bound to take by their duty not merely to himself but to the nation at large. The manner in which they met his request, and the whole train of unfortunate and discreditable occurrences which arose out of it, will however be more fitly narrated in a subsequent chapter.<sup>2</sup>

Another letter shows that this, though the most important, was not the only subject on which Lord Liverpool found

<sup>1</sup> The numbers were 357 *v.* 178 : majority, 179.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. iii. p. 15.

himself compelled to thwart his royal master's personal wishes. The costly mania for building had at all times full possession of his Royal Highness, who was the more inclined to indulge it from the pretext which his position afforded him of gratifying it at the expense of the nation. There was some ground for the plea that of the royal palaces in London no one was singly adapted to all the requirements of the sovereign. St. James's was notoriously unfit for a residence, and Buckingham Palace, to which the Prince now proposed to remove from Carlton House, which was to a certain extent his private property, had no apartments sufficiently capacious for levees and drawing-rooms. He desired therefore to enlarge his intended new abode, expecting that Parliament should vote the money, and that he himself should be at liberty to design and from time to time direct all the details without control; a plan which it was easy to see was calculated to lead to almost boundless expense.

Lord Liverpool takes this mode of conveying his sentiments in consequence of the communication Mr. Long has had with him, by the Prince Regent's command, on the subject of the late Queen's palace.

In the first place, Lord Liverpool is fully sensible of the wisdom of his Royal Highness's determination in removing from Carlton House to the Queen's palace.

The situation of Buckingham House, its being detached from all other buildings, the ground belonging to it, and more particularly it being in a substantial state of repair and fit for immediate habitation, renders it, in Lord Liverpool's judgment, a much more proper residence for his Royal Highness in his present situation than Carlton House.

Lord Liverpool feels it to be his duty further to submit his opinion, that however desirable some addition to the Queen's palace may be (with a view to his Royal Highness holding drawing-rooms), it would not be felt by the public to be indispensably necessary; and Lord Liverpool cannot but think, therefore, that in the present circumstances of the country such addition would better be deferred.

If however it is judged expedient to take any steps for this purpose, Lord Liverpool cannot conceal that it would be quite impracticable to look to any grant of public money by Parliament for this purpose.

The only measure which could be resorted to would be to sell or to lease the site on which St. James's Palace now stands. This would not produce any considerable sum,<sup>1</sup> and the authority of Parliament would be required for the application of it to the proposed object.

Lord Liverpool would not be acting fairly by his Royal Highness if he did not endeavour to impress upon him that any measure of this sort would be viewed with particular jealousy, and, if it could be carried through the House of Commons, it would be only on the ground that the Treasury were to be strictly responsible for the extent of the undertaking (not exceeding the amount of the sum raised by the means above mentioned), and for the execution in detail of the intended improvement.

Lord Liverpool feels it to be his duty to state that he could not take upon himself the responsibility which would attach to him in such a business, unless the whole work was to be placed under the immediate control of the Board of Treasury, and they were permitted to employ in the execution of it those persons on whom they can depend. Lord Liverpool ventures to hope that before his Royal Highness comes to any further decision upon this subject, he will duly weigh all the importance of it at this moment, and that he will be graciously pleased to consider those observations which Lord Liverpool has made upon it.

The fact that the idea of alienating the palace of St. James's from the Crown should have been entertained for a moment, though it was only mentioned to be put aside, is not without its strangeness; in the language of the Court and of diplomacy that palace, unsightly and inconvenient as it may be, has so long been identified with the Government

<sup>1</sup> The estimate here hinted at is worth remarking as a proof of the enormous increase in the value of London property in the last half century. St. James's Palace, with all its appurtenances, probably covers four or five acres, and within the last few years land has been sold in Pall Mall at the rate of £300,000 an acre.

that its destruction or alienation would seem almost like the removal of one of our most ancient and recognised landmarks, and it is at least as doubtful whether any minister would propose as whether any Parliament would sanction such a measure. The Prince had the good sense to see that Lord Liverpool's opposition to his wishes was dictated by the strictest sense of duty; he acquiesced in the force of his objections, and though great additions have since been made to Buckingham Palace, they have been only such as have been required for the necessary accommodation of the different members of the Royal Family and their attendants, and the old palace of St. James's, whose very name has long been inseparably identified with the English court, still witnesses the state receptions of her subjects by the sovereign.

As the summer wore on Lord Liverpool was warned from more than one quarter that demagogues were busily exerting themselves to reawaken the discontented spirit of the preceding year, and the ceaseless industry with which some of the lower organs of the press were labouring to excite disaffection was no secret to any one. Such publications were at this moment furnished with a more than usually exciting topic to aid them in inflaming the people by the unfortunate issue of a riot which had just taken place at Manchester. Before the breaking out of the French Revolution some of our greatest statesmen had urged the expediency of Parliamentary reform, and, though the necessity which that event imposed upon them of doing all in their power to check the contagion of the spirit of anarchy, instead of stimulating it by any alteration of our own constitution, led to their withdrawal of their first proposals; and though the fearful lessons inculcated by the progress and result of the rebellion in France convinced others, who in all probability would under different circumstances have been favorable to a moderate and judicious expansion of our electoral system, that any steps taken in such a direction would be like the letting out of water, and that permanent safety to the Constitution was only

to be found in a resistance to all innovation ; yet it was easy to foresee that the demand for such a measure, which had never been allowed entirely to slumber, would be revived as soon as the cessation of war left the general public in want of some excitement. Accordingly, during the whole of the year of which we are speaking, the seekers after notoriety and influence with the populace were busily employed in organizing meetings in large towns to demand reform. The leaders assumed the name of Radicals, to signify their desire to remodel the whole existing system of Government from its very foundations, and by harangues that connected defects and abuses in the constitution of the House of Commons, which could hardly be denied, with the recent distress, they stimulated their ignorant hearers to a high degree of excitement and fury. A meeting at Birmingham actually elected Sir Charles Wolseley, who, though a baronet of respectable family, was an ardent supporter of the most extreme views in politics, as "legislatorial attorney" and "representative" of the town, and insisted that he should repair to London on the next meeting of Parliament and claim a right to take his seat among the regularly elected members. The language uttered by the "representative" himself was so undisguisedly menacing and seditious that he was brought to trial for it, convicted, and sentenced to a long imprisonment. The first meetings, however, that were held in different places passed over without any acts of open violence or resistance to the law ; but there was abundant reason to apprehend that such would not long continue to be the case. It became known to the authorities at the Home Office that in different parts of the manufacturing districts large bodies of men were nightly assembled and drilled according to the rules and practice of military discipline ; and as the chief promoters of these movements had given ostentatious notice of their intention to hold a still larger meeting at Manchester on the 16th of August, the magistrates of the town, who seem to have been perplexed between the resolution to maintain and enforce order and obedience to the

laws and their fear of acting prematurely, drew up warrants for the apprehension of the ringleaders, but directed the constables to abstain from executing them till the proceedings should have actually commenced. Such a plan, though dictated by a prudent desire to show forbearance to the latest possible moment, was most injudicious, since it must manifestly be dangerous, if not impossible, for ever so strong a body of constables to force their way through a crowd which could only be counted by tens of thousands, and to arrest their leaders in their sight. The result was such as might have been anticipated. When the meeting took place on the appointed ground, a large field near St. Peter's Church, and known to the townsmen as Peterloo, the constables declared themselves unable to discharge the duty imposed on them without military aid. The first troops who were directed to assist them, the yeomanry of the county, only encouraged the mob by the unskilfulness of their movements; they entangled themselves separately and helplessly in the crowd, till at last it became necessary to employ a small force of regular soldiers, and four troops of the 15th Hussars were brought up to rescue the Yeomanry, and to perform their task. The Hussars were encountered with stones and brickbats, but in no very formidable shower, for in truth the very numbers and density of the mob hindered its action; but they pressed on, behaving with the greatest forbearance and humanity, trusting merely to the compactness of their order to force their way, and when they were forced to use their weapons striking only with the flats of their swords. Discipline prevailed: they forced their way to a hustings in the middle of the field which was the place of meeting, seized a man named Hunt and a few more of the most prominent rioters, and carried them off in custody, the mob being too much intimidated to attempt to rescue them. No estimate has represented the crowd as falling below 60,000 persons; and that in a conflict, however mercifully waged, between soldiers and so vast an assemblage, some persons should have received serious and even fatal injuries

was almost inevitable. But the smallness of the number of victims is of itself an irresistible testimony in favour of the humanity of the soldiers. Many of the populace were indeed severely bruised, and a few bones were broken, but the cases of wounds from the Hussars' swords did not much if at all exceed twenty, and of these only two or three proved fatal: one constable was killed, having been ridden over by the cavalry; and one of the Yeomanry, whose skull had been fractured by a brickbat.

Still, comparatively trifling as was such a list of casualties, that there should have been any loss of life at all was a lamentable occurrence, calculated to make a great impression on the country at large, and not difficult for ill-disposed people to dilate upon as a proof of the harshness of the Government. With an exaggeration which the number of the victims made ridiculous, the Radicals termed it the Manchester massacre. As usual, the aldermen and common council of London took the lead in testifying their sympathy with the rioters and their hostility to the Government, addressing a petition to the Prince Regent, which laid down the law in a manner so insolent as to elicit a dignified but severe reproof from his Royal Highness when it was presented to him. Yorkshire followed the example, the Lord-Lieutenant himself, Earl Fitzwilliam, taking so active a part in calling a public meeting, whose avowed object was the condemnation of the conduct of the Administration in dealing with these riotous assemblages, that Lord Liverpool at once removed him from an office whose duties he thus betrayed. Lord Liverpool's opinion on the whole transaction, and on the general condition of the country, and on the policy to be adopted, is fully expressed in the following letters to Canning, who was abroad at the time:

Fife House, September 23d, 1819.

MY DEAR CANNING,

I avail myself of the departure of Castlereagh's messenger for Naples to give you some information as to our actual situation.

Huskisson has promised me that he will write to you by the same channel, and will, I have no doubt, therefore make up for any deficiency which you may find in this letter. I have, fortunately, little to say on foreign politics, as no event of any importance has occurred since you left England.

We hear that the elections in France are likely to end favorably for the Government, and that the present system appears to acquire consistency. Morley is just returned from France, and is very sanguine about the stability of the present Government, and does not think that even the demise of the King would, as things now stand, endanger the present dynasty.

Count Capo D'Istria was here for a fortnight. His conversation and views were very satisfactory, and we are fairly entitled to argue from them that a cordial, good understanding is likely for the present to exist amongst the Great Powers on all questions of general interest.

The internal situation of Germany is certainly critical, and it is impossible to say what may grow out of it. Austria and Prussia, however, understand each other, and it appears that the object will be to endeavour to satisfy the public mind in Germany by the establishment of provincial states, but to oppose the notion of general National Assemblies.

We have heard nothing further upon the subject of the Princess of Wales; I cannot therefore say whether the enquiries have been proceeding or not, nor consequently (if they have) what has been the success of them, and I have thought it most prudent to ask no questions.

I come now to what is more material: the internal state of the country.

The accounts of the proceedings at Manchester will of course have reached you, and will probably have in some degree alarmed you. To enable you to judge, however, fairly of the actual state of things, I must begin with acquainting you that, if certain manufacturing districts are excepted, that is, Lancashire, part of Cheshire, the West Riding of Yorkshire, some parts of the central counties which are contiguous, and likewise Glasgow and Paisley and their neighbourhood, I have never known the country in general, since the conclusion of the war, and I believe I might say since I have been in Parliament,



in a more prosperous situation. I include in this statement the metropolis, where the reformers have been able to do nothing because they have no distress nor practical grievance to work upon.

The harvest, taking in the produce of the earth of all descriptions, has been most productive ; the great complaint has been the want of hands to get it in.

Poor rates in many parts of the country are falling ; crimes diminishing. In the metropolis and its neighbourhood there has been a diminution of one-third in the number of offenders since last year. This favorable statement may be applied likewise to many of the manufacturing districts ; to Warwickshire, to Staffordshire, and to the iron works in Wales.

But I must now reverse the picture ; and I must say that nothing can be worse or more alarming than the state of those parts of the country which I first excepted.

You will naturally ask whether the proceedings of the magistrates at Manchester on the 16th were really justifiable? To this I answer, in the first instance, that all the papers on which they proceeded were laid before the Chancellor, and the Attorney and Solicitor-General, and that they were fully satisfied that the meeting was of a character and description, and assembled under such circumstances, as justified the magistrates in dispersing it by force.

You will have seen in the public papers that the grand jury of Lancashire have in a degree sanctioned their opinion by throwing out the bills against the Yeomanry, and by finding the bill against Hunt and his accomplices.

You will have seen, likewise, the resolutions of the grand jury of the county of Chester, but I send you with this a document which has not yet been made public, the report of the grand jury of the county of Lancaster to the Lord Lieutenant and Secretary of State. It is a most important document ; it is signed, as you will observe, by Lord Stanley,<sup>1</sup> and goes certainly to

<sup>1</sup> The report was laid before Parliament in the ensuing session, and is published in the Parliamentary Debates, xli. 266. The following are amongst the most important statements : " From the result of that enquiry, it appears that the most inflammatory publications have for some time been industriously circulated, at a price which puts them

establish that parts of that county have been in a state little short, if at all, of actual rebellion.

When I say that the proceedings of the magistrates at Manchester on the 16th ult. were justifiable, you will understand me as not by any means deciding that the course which they pursued on that occasion was in all its parts prudent. A great deal might be said in their favour even on this head ; but, whatever judgment might be formed in this respect, being satisfied that they were substantially right, there remained no alternative but to support them ; and I am sorry to say that, notwithstanding the support which they have received, there prevails such a panic throughout that part of the country that it is difficult to get either magistrates to act or witnesses to come forward to give evidence, and that many of the lower orders who were supposed loyal have joined the disaffected, partly from fear, and partly from a conviction that some great change was near at hand.

Under these circumstances we thought it right to assemble such of our colleagues as were within reach, for the purpose of con-

very generally into the hands of the poorest classes of society. The training and military drilling of large bodies of men, under regular leaders, have for some time been carried on to a great extent, and the times chosen for the purpose are principally during the night, or at such hours as seem best calculated to elude public observation. Marching, and other military movements, are practised with great precision, and the words of command are promptly and implicitly obeyed. It has not come to the knowledge of the Grand Jury that arms have been used on these occasions, and though there is no doubt that weapons of offence have been manufactured, yet to what amount does not appear. One of the most powerful engines to which the disaffected have resorted, is a system of intimidation, which prevails to a most serious and alarming degree. Not only have threats to persons and property been made use of, and put into execution, but even combinations have been formed to discountenance and to ruin those publicans and shopkeepers who have come forward in support of the civil power. To such an extent does this prevail, that individuals who are well-disposed, are deterred from declaring the sentiments which they really entertain, or from giving information which may lead to the detection of offenders. In one populous district, no warrant for ordinary offences, or other legal process, can be executed ; the payment of taxes has ceased, and the landlords are threatened with the discontinuance of their rents."

sidering whether Parliament should now be called to meet early in November. We have decided against calling it at present, but we all feel that events may occur in the course of the next three weeks which may render the calling of Parliament before Christmas an imperative duty.

I mention this circumstance, as it is very desirable that you should so manage as to return to England by the middle or end of November.

- When Parliament does meet, it will be indispensably necessary to consider what measures can be adopted for averting those evils with which the country is so seriously threatened by the frequency of these seditious meetings, and still more perhaps by the outrageous licentiousness of the press.

The remedies are undoubtedly full of difficulty. The question must be, is the country ripe for strong and effectual measures on these points ; and, how long can we venture to wait, and go on without them. One very material reason for not calling Parliament at an unusual and inconvenient time of the year was, that we must have been prepared with our measures without having had the means of informing ourselves of the sentiments of those who must support them.

I hope I shall hear that you have had an agreeable journey. I am going to Walmer on Saturday, and I trust you will find me there if you return before the middle of November.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

Fife House, 10th October, 1819.

MY DEAR CANNING,

The letter which I wrote to you on the 23d of September will in some degree have prepared you for the present communication. It has been determined that Parliament shall meet before Christmas, and a proclamation will appear in the *Gazette* of Tuesday, for the assembling of Parliament, for the despatch of business, on the 23d of November.

I trust it will be in your power to be here a few days before the 23d, more particularly as you had fixed your return even before you left England for the middle or end of next month.

We hesitated in fixing the day of meeting between the 16th and the 23d, and we determined in favour of the latter day, prin-

cipally from the consideration that before that time you might arrive in London.

You will probably have collected from my former letter, that the meeting of Parliament before Christmas was a matter of doubt even at that time, but various occurrences have since taken place which have altered the view which was then taken of the question. Though the city of London had come forward with an address respecting the Manchester proceedings, we had no reason at that time to believe that the respectable part of Opposition would give any countenance to the clamour which had been excited on this subject. On the contrary, we understood that Phillips of Manchester, who had taken, as you will recollect, a very active part against the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act three years ago, had written to his friends in vindication of what had taken place, and had requested of them at least not to commit themselves in any way against the magistrates.

The first symptom of a different feeling was the appearance of Lawrence Dundas at the meeting at York, and this was followed a short time after by the intelligence of Lord Fitzwilliam having agreed to sign a requisition for a county meeting in Yorkshire, upon the feeble and futile pretext of taking the whole question out of the hands of the Radicals. Lord Fitzwilliam's conduct has, as might have been expected, decided the system of tactics of the Opposition, and there are now requisitions for county meetings in most of the counties where the Opposition think they can muster in considerable numbers.

We have no reason to be dissatisfied with the conduct of our friends, but those who live in the disturbed districts have been loudly calling for the meeting of Parliament, and we fear that in other quarters they may compromise the question by refusing to concur in any censure, but agreeing to address the Regent to call Parliament. We even heard that such addresses were preparing in some quarters, and they certainly would have put us under very serious difficulties ; for to have decided not to call Parliament would have been subjecting ourselves to a very severe responsibility if these meetings during the winter months should continue, and any strong measures become necessary for dispersing them ; and, on the other hand, it would have

had a very bad appearance to call Parliament in consequence of any such addresses or requisitions, and not because we judged the measure under all the circumstances expedient in itself.

There will be certainly considerable embarrassment as to our course of proceeding when Parliament does meet, and if the meeting could have been deferred till after the trials of Hunt and his accomplices, I should have thought it best to have subjected ourselves to any other intervening difficulties; but these trials cannot take place till the Spring Assizes, and the difficulties of this description would be, therefore, precisely the same in January as they would be in November. In this respect, therefore, we should gain nothing by the delay.

We are now considering, with the assistance of the law officers, what measures can be adopted for counteracting the evils and dangers which have unfortunately grown out of the spirit too prevalent in the present times. This is a subject of immense difficulty, and one upon which we should all be most anxious for your assistance. Even Lord Erskine and Mr. Brougham have declared (the last in his speech in Westmoreland, and the former in a new edition of the "Defence of the Whigs") that meetings of the description of those which have recently taken place in Lancashire and Yorkshire ought if possible to be prevented.

Whatever our measures may be, they ought to be such as we should be able to stand to, when once they are introduced into Parliament. They ought, therefore, to be well considered before they are brought forward, and it is on this account to be regretted that the early meeting of Parliament does not give us all the time that could have been desired. We must, however, do the best we can in the situation in which circumstances have placed us.

I am going down to Walmer for a fortnight, but I shall settle in town about the 2d of November, and we have all agreed to assemble on the 8th. I send you the report made by the delegate of magistrates who attended Lord Sidmouth on the 30th of September. It is a very important and alarming document.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

We have fallen upon days when ministers of the Crown, from whichever party they may be taken, no longer think it necessary carefully to consider their measures in all their details before their introduction into Parliament, that after that introduction they may be able "to stand to them." But such painstaking and prudent forethought is not the less their duty; not the less indispensable to their own credit, as well as to the safety of the country; and never was there greater need of such deliberate wisdom than at the period of which we are speaking: nor was it ever of more vital consequence to the State that the Prime Minister, on whom in fact everything depended, should have clear views of the course to be adopted, and resolution to adhere to his own opinions, so rash and irritating were the counsels which were pressed upon him by many of those whose undoubted good-will to his Government rendered great tact necessary in rejecting their recommendations. Lord Kenyon besought him to encourage "the well-disposed" to form "armed associations" for the maintenance of tranquillity; a step far more calculated to produce the opposite effect. The Duke of York "urged very strongly," as Lord Liverpool reported to one of his colleagues, "an augmentation of the army," a measure which "independent of the expense, which, however, was a very material consideration at that time, Lord Liverpool was persuaded would have the most unfavorable effect on the minds of the friends of the Administration; who would consider the ministers as availing themselves of the present circumstances to retrace their steps on the subject of the army establishment." Another of his brother peers recommended him to provide employment for at least a portion of those who were in want of work, by bringing into cultivation the waste lands of the kingdom, a considerable portion of which belonged to the Crown. And Lord Liverpool's reply shows some of the difficulties of, and objections to, such a step as he viewed it. There will probably

be little doubt among practical agriculturists that his opinion was sound, at least in one respect, that the greater part of the land which was really waste could only be reclaimed at an expense which would far exceed its value when brought under cultivation. But it may be questioned, perhaps, whether there are not political advantages to be derived from such work, in finding not only labour for the unemployed, but space for dwellings for the houseless, which counterbalance the mischief that would at first seem to be the necessary consequence of a misuse of capital, and which might justify the statesman in countenancing enterprises which strict economy would forbid. The wisdom of abstaining, as a general rule, from bolstering up commercial speculations by State aid is now so fully established by experience that scarcely any one at the present day will call it in question.

*Private.*

Fife House, 18th December, 1819.

MY DEAR LORD,

I have this morning received your letter, and can assure you that you do me no more than justice, in believing that it is my sincere desire to adopt any measure that may really tend to relieve the distresses of the country.

The plan, however, that you propose for forcing waste land into cultivation has been most seriously considered by me on various occasions, and, independent of all the difficulties in detail which would attend such a measure (difficulties, I believe, nearly insurmountable), I am thoroughly convinced, both from my own reflection and from communication with others, that, so far from being beneficial to the country, it would be in the highest degree injurious to it, and would in addition to all our present difficulties revive all that agricultural distress which is now subsiding. I am fully satisfied that the principal cause of that distress was the quantity of land that was brought under the plough in the last years of the war, in consequence of the very high prices of corn, and that if one-half of the capital had been employed in improving the cultivation of the old lands, which was made use of in forcing new lands into cultivation, the

produce of the country would have been considerably greater, and the distress that was felt to so great a degree would scarcely have existed.

You misunderstand me if you suppose that I think that the proposed aid to commercial undertakings in some of the most distressed districts is likely to be of any real, permanent value to the country. The utmost that can be said in favour of it is, that under the limitations with which it is accompanied it would do little harm, and in the meantime it would relieve temporary distress till trade comes round, and the population can find employment in a natural way.

I am satisfied that Government or Parliament never meddle with these matters at all, but they do harm more or less. But sometimes, to avert a present and very pressing evil, we are obliged to depart from what is sound, both in principle and practice.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

Even Rothschild, the money dealer, had a nostrum of his own to recommend: on the nature of this Lord Liverpool makes this comment to the Chancellor of the Exchequer:

*Private.*

Walmer Castle, October 31st, 1819.

DEAR VANSITTART,

Nothing can be more foolish than Rothschild's following you, and intending to follow me, into the country. If his proceeding is known it can of course only augment the general alarm, and increase all the evils he is desirous of preventing.

Various untoward circumstances have certainly occurred recently, but I am inclined to think if we are quiet things will come right. I know from a person who has seen Baring within these few days, that he is of opinion that there will be a great reaction as to our funds, and that the French funds cannot rise much beyond their present price.

The point, however, upon which I feel most anxiety is the idea suggested by Rothschild, of a continuance of the Bank restriction. I am satisfied that no measure could be more fatal, and



that the very notion of its being a matter for consideration would do harm. In the first place, there is not the smallest real pretext for it, for, supposing the exchanges to remain unfavorable for a short time, the Bank was only obliged to pay at £4 1s., and this must be to them a sufficient security; and as to their not having considerably augmented their treasure, I think it a very fortunate circumstance in every respect.

As to the continuing the restriction from the dread of their diminishing their circulation too much, this would be a ground for perpetual restriction, and is the idea of all others that it was most necessary to combat last year. Let us therefore determine to stand upon our present system, and let no one entertain a doubt that this is our determination. I am persuaded the Bank, for their own interest, when they see we are firm, will not make any improper reduction of their circulation; but even if they did, I think it would be both easier and wiser to have recourse to other remedies, than to retrace the course we took last year.

It is very material, however, that we should pay them as much as we can before Parliament meets, and that we should endeavour to settle the periods at which the remainder of the 5,000,000*l.* could be paid. The change of the bank-notes is certainly a measure of considerable delicacy, and it may be worth considering whether it should not be deferred for a short time, until the state of the monied market was somewhat more settled.

I shall be in town on Wednesday, and I shall hope to see you the middle or end of this week, as it may be material we should have some conversation before the Cabinet is collected on the 8th.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

Even of those who were adverse to the recent arrangement for the resumption of cash payments, none could doubt that to have rescinded it at such a moment would have been to give the recent disturbances an importance in the eyes of the country, and of the rioters themselves, which would have been fraught with danger to the State. It was only by firmness that such open

sedition could be met ; and the resolution with which the Government confronted it, and encouraged those who had exerted themselves in the cause of public tranquillity and order, brought them support from quarters to which they had hardly looked for it. A few days before the meeting of Parliament, Lord Grenville opened a correspondence with Lord Liverpool which will be read with interest, not only as showing the opinions that even men wholly unconnected with the Cabinet took of the existing crisis, but likewise for the evidence which it affords how widely those who now claim to be the adherents of the old Whig policy, the depositaries of the old Whig traditions, have departed from the maxims which the Whig statesmen of the last generation adopted as their rule of conduct :

MY DEAR LORD,

Dropmore, November 12th, 1819.

If you see the present situation of the country in the same light with myself, I am sure I need make no apology for the step which I now take in troubling you with such thoughts as have occurred to myself upon it, and have been confirmed by the general concurrence of the very few intimate friends with whom I have communicated on this occasion. If they are of the smallest use in suggesting what may be of benefit in such a moment, my purpose is abundantly answered. If you think I see these matters in too serious a light, you will, of course, lay this paper aside with the many others which are produced by a mistaken solicitude for the public interests.

I have not had time to compress it as I should have wished to do, if it were only from a due regard to your time ; but, from the moment that the idea of troubling you with these notions occurred to me, I felt that their use, if any, must wholly depend on their being forwarded to you without a day's delay. The time, indeed, between this and the meeting of Parliament seems already to be hardly sufficient for the consideration of any new proposals : if these, or any of them, are really new to you, on a subject which you must so much have considered.

Believe me ever, my dear Lord,

Most faithfully yours,

GRENVILLE.

*Memorandum enclosed with the foregoing letter.*

It is understood that the principal object for which Parliament now meets, is to provide for the public tranquillity and safety.

The dangers to which these are now exposed would seem to be very inadequately appreciated if they were considered as occasional or temporary, and therefore as capable of being counteracted by any measures of that character. The object of effecting a revolution in this country by inflaming the worst passions of the lowest orders of society has been unremittedly pursued for many years past. During the war its success was in great measure impeded by the large amount of military force then at the disposal of Government, by the extraordinary powers given by Parliament to the Crown, and by the great interest which the mass of our community took, and very justly, in the success of that contest.

Since the peace the progress of these designs has been manifestly much more rapid. It has indeed been favoured, from time to time, by circumstances of temporary and local distress ; but these have not been greater, they may be truly said to have been much less, than had before been frequently experienced without leading to any such results. So great a change as has been shown since the peace in the general temper and conduct of a large proportion of our population, has perhaps rarely occurred in any country. It seems no exaggeration to say, that if the promoters of general confusion can make as much new way in the next three or four years as they have done in the last, we must consider insurrection and civil bloodshed as inevitable ; though even then we may hope that their issue would not be doubtful.

But the misery of such events, even for the shortest period, is so dreadful in prospect, that we should surely leave nothing undone which may prevent their actual occurrence.

For this purpose it is natural to consider the means which have brought us to our present state, and which are still at work to produce and to accelerate this great calamity. The course pursued for these purposes has been in exact conformity with the beginnings of the French Revolution.

First, the doctrines of sedition, treason, and blasphemy have been circulated with an industry almost incredible, and in every form in which they could be made most accessible and most acceptable to the poorest and most ignorant classes of the community. The immense quantities, and the infinite variety of shapes, in which these poisons have been obtruded on the lower orders, have, by the mere effect of numbers, given protection and impunity to all but the most outrageous offenders; and this very circumstance has more than once been available even to them as a plea of justification and defence. The zeal which the editors of public papers have, for obvious reasons, almost universally manifested against such prosecutions has had no little effect in influencing the minds of juries; and the law officers of the Crown themselves, from a reluctance (perhaps too great) to expose themselves to failure, have very sparingly, and in the most glaring instances only, exercised the functions which the Constitution, for the very purpose of averting this mischief, has confided to their hands.

Whether this view of its causes be accurate or not, the fact is undeniable. The mischief has not been prevented. It has not been in any considerable degree controlled. It is still increasing, and the country is at this hour absolutely deluged with the effusions of sedition and blasphemy.

2dly. When this strong position had been thus taken and established, the next advance here, as in the French Revolution, was to the formation of numerous local societies, for the wider and more effectual diffusion of such publications, and for the dissemination of their doctrines, by the ready mode of familiar and daily communication.

And, lastly, when the minds of the populace in the metropolis, and in the manufacturing districts, had thus been deeply tainted, and prepared for mischief, the project was resorted to here, as in France, of collecting them in numerous and tumultuous public meetings, where they might be taught to estimate their own numerical force, and might be kept continually inflamed by hearing every species of falsehood and calumny, sedition and treason, dealt out to them for hours together in the face of day, and in open defiance of all decency, law, and public authority.

These things were for a long time connived at and tolerated. But, instead of any soothing effect having resulted from the forbearance, the authors of all this evil have derived from it fresh boldness and increasing violence. At last the moment came when it was judged that the security of one of our greatest commercial towns required that some resistance should be made to this system. What might probably at an earlier period have been easily done by the civil power, now naturally could not be effected without the interposition of a military force, and the consequences to which that necessity led have produced a crisis, the result of which will most probably be decisive of our future situation. The final resolution must be now taken, either to stop the evil here, or to acquiesce in its progress until it actually brings us to insurrection and civil war.

For the determination of that alternative it is not indifferent to consider what change in our means of resistance the interval may produce. Intimidation is in this country, as in every other, the great engine of revolution. Those who know anything of the state of France in the beginning of her troubles, know that the great mass of that community, down even to the lowest orders, were at that time much further removed from republican or revolutionary principles than the mass of the British people, untainted as it still is in many of its leading parts, can at this hour be said to be. The same engines of terror which are now at work (hitherto I hope without success, but who shall say how long it will be so?) to intimidate the magistrates, the military, and above all the Yeomanry, from the future discharge of their duty, were unremittedly employed in France, and with complete and decisive effect, with the effect of necessarily disarming every power, and ultimately of annihilating every authority, within that country, of whatever nature or description, which did not either originate from or exclusively depend on the Revolutionists themselves. And if Providence has decreed that we also are to be exposed to anything like a similar contest, it is of the highest importance that we should resolve not to meet it under the same disadvantage.

If, then, the view which we have taken of the present evil is just, the conclusion to which it leads seems to be irresistible. We

must attribute its rapid and unexpected progress, not to fortuitous and passing circumstances, but to inherent and permanent causes; to some laxity, perhaps I should say, in the execution of the laws to which we looked for protection against it; but much more, as it seems to me, to the want of necessary despatch, energy, or vigour in the system itself, and in those forms of administering it which have grown up under circumstances very different from these, or were originally adapted to a state of our society to which the present bears no resemblance.

It is with sincere distrust of himself that a man neither professionally instructed in the science of law, nor habitually conversant in its forms, must speak on such subjects. But, if the disease be really here, it is here also that the remedy must be applied, and applied by legislators and statesmen labouring, many of them, under the same disadvantages which attach to this paper. It may, therefore, be not wholly useless to state some of these matters in the light in which they strike an unlearned man.

The first of them is forced upon our minds by the event which has brought all these questions to their crisis. After making every allowance for the effects of clamour and misrepresentation for so long a time wholly unopposed, it were vain to deny that some public uneasiness is created by the apparent stop of all judicial proceedings in a case where so much wanton violence has been imputed, however unjustly, to the public authorities. Three months have already elapsed since the meeting at Manchester took place. Five months more must still pass over us before any trial can be had, or any judicial opinion be pronounced on any part of those transactions.

Had the promoters of that meeting been indicted for treason, as was first threatened, their trial would, as in the Derby cases, have been long since concluded. Had they committed murder there it would, except under very special circumstances, have been tried at the assizes, which were held in the very same month. Such would have been the course when the prisoner's life was at stake. But an indictment found for a conspiracy to overthrow the Government by force may be traversed by the defendant like the smallest misdemeanour. That traverse

adjourns the case from July to April; the prisoner is then released on bail, and it will be little less than nine months from the date of the accusation that the King and the prisoner will have justice done to them upon it.

Such a course of judicial proceeding may operate for vengeance, it can never operate to prevention. And if the points at issue happen, as in the present case, to interest the passions or the prejudices of mankind, the opinions formed upon them, on however insufficient or mistaken grounds, must in this long interval take so firm a root that at last, when the hour of trial comes, impartial justice becomes hardly attainable, and satisfactory justice utterly unattainable.

To obviate a part of this mischief in the present case, it is perhaps to be regretted that the expedient did not occur of issuing a special commission of Oyer and Terminer and gaol delivery for the northern counties in October. Whether the traverses now standing over till the next assizes could have been tried under such commission I do not presume to say, though no obvious objection appears against it. But, even if this was impossible, still it appears to me that the opening such a court for new proceedings in new cases must in the existing state of those counties have operated as a most beneficial, conciliatory, and tranquillizing expedient.

Even now there are, perhaps, no means by which it would be so easy to solve all the conflicting embarrassments and difficulties attending 'on the question of resisting or admitting, either wholly or to any limited extent, the parliamentary enquiries purposed to be instituted into those proceedings, as by an address from the two Houses to the Crown, recommending that such a commission should now be issued with all practical despatch. This proposal, if not better informed on the subject, I should myself feel much disposed to bring forward, but if the King's servants concur in it, it would, on every account, much better originate from them.

But whatever may be thought of this suggestion as applicable to our present circumstances, it seems on all general principles of government undeniable that this long suspension of justice weakens almost beyond calculation the energy of the laws and the vigour of all public authority.

1. The first measure, therefore, and in my view by far the most important, to which I look for the means of permanently giving strength and security to our subsisting frame of government, is the interposing constantly and universally throughout the whole United Kingdom an autumn assize at the least, if not both an autumn and a winter assize, between those of the summer and the succeeding spring.  
If, as I believe, the labour of our judges is even without this addition already much too great, their number must be augmented independently even of this proposal. To acquiesce in a defect or a delay of justice because we cannot afford to pay more judges would be an absurdity too revolting to discuss. Much more would it be so if that defect or delay was also productive of dangers to the public tranquillity. But it may be material to observe that this augmentation need not, and ought not, to have the effect of increasing the number of judges actually sitting in our principal courts. Four is for that purpose a number much preferable to five, and still more so to any larger number. There seems to be extra business, and of course much more than sufficient to employ the whole time of an additional judge for each court, or even of two if that were necessary, for the purpose of more frequent assizes: and the regular course of justice in the courts themselves would be accelerated by being freed from so much extraneous demand on the time of the judges.
2. The precise limitation which might consistently with full protection to innocence be put on the present powers of traversing indictments for sedition, blasphemy, or treasonable conspiracy, or of removing them by *certiorari*, I do not pretend to assign without hearing and fully weighing the difficulties, if any such there are, of professional men. At first view one would think it abundantly sufficient if such a power of adjournment or transfer were left, on special cause shown, to the discretion of the court in which the indictment is found, or of the higher courts to which it is subordinate.
3. The same observations in all their parts seem applicable to the question of bail, after indictment found in any of the cases above described. It would seem a mockery to any man unacquainted with the fact to tell him that after putting a man to



plead in open court to a charge of having actually and recently been engaged in a conspiracy to subvert our Government by force, we then proceed to set him at liberty, and give him nine months to prosecute his design, only providing that if he fails he shall come to be tried for it at the end of that period.

4. I know not to what it is to be attributed, but the fact is certain that under the pretence of pleading their own cause the authors and promoters of all this evil have been permitted to pursue a systematic and increasing course of insulting all magistrates and courts of justice, from the highest to the lowest; and that the daily occurrence of this outrage is of the worst effect in diminishing among the lower orders of the community the habits of respect, deference, and obedience due both to the laws and to those who administer them.

It has generally been said, if I remember right, in such books as I have formerly read on these subjects, that all courts and magistrates, even the lowest, are armed with sufficient authority to command and enforce respect. If, having that power, they omit to exercise it, one may be allowed to say, with all due respect, that they are unmindful of a very principal duty of their stations; but if, on the contrary, some new difficulty, hitherto unprovided for by the law, arises, as I have heard it alleged, from the new character of defendants personally pleading their own cause, and therefore not to be silenced by authority as strangers might be, then I have no hesitation in saying that this difficulty should be met by a new provision adapted to the case. In a late trial there seems (as it is reported) to have been something like an appeal made on both sides to the jury, as if with them, not with the Bench, rested the decision as to the regularity or admissibility of a particular line of defence. It is hardly necessary to remark of what moment it is, in times like these, that such boundaries should be carefully and authoritatively preserved.

It will, however, be remembered, that what is here said applies most forcibly, indeed, to the most exalted of our courts and magistrates; but it applies to all. The authority of all must be maintained in the exercise of their respective functions, for all are equally essential to the administration of our mixed form of Government.

5. It seems also most highly desirable, though a matter certainly of some difficulty, that sufficient powers should be vested in the magistracy to restrain, by their intervention, the continued publication of blasphemous and seditious papers (improperly confounded with the lighter term libels) both in the interval between indictment and trial and also after conviction. As the law now stands, the evil is done while the law is deliberating on its character, and even after judgment is pronounced upon it ; and as great profit often attends the multiplied sale, fine becomes nugatory, and imprisonment cannot be repeated in any proportion to the number of offences committed.
6. This last consideration leads obviously to the question why this country should (and should, as I imagine, in modern times only,) be the only civilized state in which the sentence of banishment is unknown otherwise than as accompanied with the circumstances attendant on transportation, from many of which the mind naturally revolts when applied to these offences. A power to courts of justice to superadd the sentence of banishment, or to substitute it, on conviction for a second offence of this description, if accompanied by other provisions, as here proposed, for the discouragement of such crimes, would seem hardly liable to the objection, otherwise a very strong one, of seeking to prevent crime only by increased severity of punishment.

The suggestions which have been thus detailed are not stated as prepared or finished measures. Far from it : they are only crude sketches and outlines of matters requiring to be deeply considered. They have a mutual bearing and relation to each other, but they must be separately weighed and discussed, if the notion were at all entertained of acting upon them. The adoption or rejection of any one of them should not be decisive as to the others. They have, however, one uniform object, and in that respect they may be considered as parts of a combined and systematic plan. They are proposed as being all likely to contribute to give despatch, energy, and dignity to the execution of our laws ; and they are all grounded on the persuasion that some such aid is greatly wanted for the sake of the public safety. It is by no means probable that they comprise all that is wanting for this purpose. Some other, but less definite ideas, have presented themselves to my own mind ;

much more, and to much better purpose, would no doubt easily be suggested by those who are daily conversant in the subject, if they were impressed with the same persuasion. My own conviction is very strong, that it is by the pursuit of this object through all its necessary details, much more than by measures apparently more vigorous, but of an occasional and temporary character, that our safety is permanently to be provided for.

Temporary measures, indeed, and particularly an augmentation of military, both regulars and yeomanry, but most especially the latter, may in the present moment be necessary in order to give to Parliament and the country an assurance of tranquillity during the period of making more permanent arrangements. And if proposed in that view, I know not how they could be objected to. But the experience of the last two years has, I think, abundantly shown, that if such expedients are relied upon as the means of permanent security they must utterly fail. They do not touch the root of the evil, and they create impressions and prejudices which rather facilitate than impede its growth.

One obvious point of necessary consideration has hitherto been passed over in this paper. What has been thus far proposed has been that with little alteration of the laws themselves, Parliament shall resolve to do with a firm and unsparing hand whatever is really necessary to give despatch, efficacy, and vigour to their execution, and to ensure respect to their authority as administered by courts and magistrates of whatever description. In this must certainly be included (but it is not here dwelt upon, because it is at this moment in discussion before the Courts of Justice) the prevention of the publication of *ex parte* evidence given before magistrates or inquests previous to trial; and also that of the promulgation of the sedition or blasphemy, which is the subject of the prosecution, under the pretence of publishing the trial itself. I well remember that in 1782, when the practice of publishing the Bow Street examinations first began, the Attorney-General of that day sent round to the newspapers a notice that he should proceed against them if they persevered in it. It was then stopped, but afterwards (I know not how soon afterwards) resumed, and no notice has since been taken of it.

But what I have hitherto passed over is a question involving the consideration of some alterations in the law itself. It relates to those tumultuous meetings which are at this moment the great and prominent resource and instrument of sedition. The actual law on this subject, such as I learnt it in my youth, was very different certainly from that *unquestionable law* which one now hears daily asserted. The discussions in Parliament, and the trials of the offenders now under prosecution (whenever those trials do take place) will however, as I trust, settle that point on much better authority than my recollections.

But this I may confidently say, that if it really is the right of all the inhabitants of this realm at all times and places, and in any numbers, armed or unarmed at their discretion, to meet for the purpose of procuring alteration in the whole or in any part of our laws and frame of government, and subject to no other restriction than not using or intending to use *present* force for the attainment of that object, all hopes of safety and much more all assurance of safety to their peaceable fellow-subjects must be abandoned ; and the Government itself, to provide for its own existence, must in self-defence become purely military. No civil institutions ever did, or ever can, subsist and maintain themselves under such a practice.

Something, therefore, will I trust be done declaratory or legislative, or both, to protect us against this evil. To define illegal assemblies otherwise than as they are now (one should have hoped sufficiently) defined by our laws, may be a task of great difficulty, but it should not therefore be abandoned as impracticable. Assemblies tumultuous, menacing, hostile in their avowed or in their real objects, in the language held or in the resolutions adopted there, to the public peace, to the safety of the King's subjects, to the lawful authority of the King, or of the legislature, or of the magistracy, or to the binding force and power of the laws, are already, as I have always thought, illegal in the judgment of the law. But it may be far from useless, among the strange and wild doctrines now circulated, that Parliament should on this occasion again, and more solemnly, promulgate to the country the doctrines and principles of our ancestors.

Some new power, if none such already exists, does however seem

necessary to be given to the local magistracy of every part of the country, to prohibit the holding such assemblies as might otherwise be legal, in spots obviously inconvenient, improper, or dangerous, as was lately done for instance in the very centre of the metropolis, as used to be done in Palace Yard and the like. They should also be distinctly empowered to prohibit the coming to any such meetings with any martial array, arms, flags, music, badges, or marks of distinction generally, and specially with any such as they shall see cause to prohibit *ex re natâ*.

In addition to this, a solemn and legislative condemnation of the object of universal suffrage and annual Parliaments, or either of them, as tending to subvert our mixed Government, and to introduce in its place an absolute and pure democracy, might have great authority and use.

The plea now used is, that a change even to that extent is within the power of Parliament to effect. That it must be lawful for the subject to petition Parliament to do that which is within its competence; and therefore lawful to meet and to discuss the grounds of such petition, and the means of promoting it. But this argument, if it be good, would carry us far indeed. It is in the power of Parliament to alter the succession to the Crown; therefore lawful for the people to petition for such change, and therefore to meet and to discuss it. Whence it would follow that nothing but their own forbearance prevents these persons from meeting daily in London to debate in public who shall be our next king, and how his succession can be best ensured.

The bill which was passed many years ago for regulating public meetings, and temporarily re-enacted I believe three years ago, is, I am afraid, very far from reaching the present object. As a temporary law it had then, and has since had, the aid of other temporary measures. But as a permanent provision, though I am not aware of any just objection that could on principle be made to it as such, it affords I fear too many means of evasion to be at all relied upon as a sole and adequate security.

How far the Legislature ought to go, and how far it would be expedient to propose that it should go, in addition to that law, are questions of no light moment. Such additions as would

in a great degree be effectual, it would probably not be difficult to devise. But the doing this, especially in a permanent form, in which alone I conceive it could be really useful, is a point on which above all others deference is due to public opinion. Great and imminent as our dangers are, there seems but too much reason to believe that neither their magnitude nor their urgency are duly estimated by the nation at large. To create unfounded alarm is always an unworthy artifice; but if the necessity does really exist, not only of strengthening the execution of the existing law, but also of doing much that is new, that necessity should first be widely and deeply impressed upon the public mind. In that extent, and for that purpose, the diffusion of just apprehension is one of the surest and most efficacious means of ultimate safety.

At so critical a moment the adhesion of a former adversary was especially important. Lord Liverpool felt its value, and his reply shows that he had already formed nearly the same opinion as Lord Grenville on the various causes of the evils and dangers which were menacing the State, and had already begun elaborating a series of measures for their removal or mitigation; though more deliberate consideration than Lord Grenville had devoted to the question; more minute information than Lord Grenville had had opportunities of acquiring; and, above all, the deep responsibility attached to his position as minister, had convinced him of the impolicy of some of the steps which Lord Grenville had recommended, though he himself also may perhaps have thought them not, in principle, objectionable.

*Private.*

Coombe Wood, 14th November, 1819.

MY DEAR LORD,

I am most truly grateful to you for your letter, which I received last night, and for the very valuable paper of observations which accompanied it.

I need scarcely say that I agree entirely with you in the general view you have taken of the internal situation of the country.

Though it cannot be denied that the great increase of our manufacturing population, the dependence of a great part of that population on foreign demand, and the refinements in machinery (which enable manufacturers to perform that work in weeks which formerly occupied months, and which lead consequently to extravagant wages at one time, and to low and inadequate ones at another), have recently subjected, and must in the nature of things subject this country to evils with which in the same degree we were formerly unacquainted; yet all these circumstances would not have accounted for the present state of the public mind in certain parts of the country, if the events of the French Revolution had not directed the attention of the lower orders of the community, and those immediately above them, to political considerations; had not shaken all respect for established authority and ancient institutions; and had not familiarized mankind with a system of organization which has been justly represented to be as ingenious and appropriate to its purpose as any invention in mechanics.

I am sanguine enough to believe that the great body of the population is still sound, but it is impossible to say how long it will remain so. I am inclined to hope that preventive measures may even now prove effectual in England without the necessity of coming to extremities. But I am very apprehensive, from all the accounts I have recently seen, that in the western parts of Scotland the evil is in a more advanced state, and will not be stopped without bloodshed.

Some of the suggestions contained in your paper are in whole, or in part, new, and certainly deserve the most serious consideration. I do not know how I can return your confidence more usefully than by stating the outline of the plan intended to be pursued by Government when Parliament meets, subject of course in its detail to modifications which may grow out of further consideration.

I forbear from entering at present into particulars of the Manchester case, though I should be glad to have some explanation with you upon it before Parliament meets. When it was decided that it was not expedient to put Hunt and his associates on their trial for high treason, the question was considered whether the inconveniences arising out of the delay from

traversing could be obviated by special commission. It was, however, the opinion of those who were consulted, and I confess I concurred in it, that unless some other obvious and sufficient grounds existed for such a commission, it would be too strong a measure to defeat the usual and regular progress of judicial proceeding by any device of this nature.

I cannot help being still of opinion that though there is no measure more obviously necessary than a bill to prevent traversing in cases of misdemeanour in future, that any attempt to give an *ex post facto* operation to this principle by accelerating the trial at Lancaster before the time when it would naturally take place would be subject to serious objections, and might create far more prejudice than it could do good.

As far as I have been able to ascertain the opinions of independent men as to the propriety of any enquiry by Parliament at present into the Manchester proceedings, I believe them to be decidedly adverse to any such enquiry. The course intended to be pursued is to announce in the speech, that information will be laid respecting the internal state of the country. Such information is indeed necessary as the foundation of our measures, and in this instant may be laid safely, and much more advantageously, by Government directly than through the medium of any committee. This information will contain, amongst other matters, an account of the whole proceeding at Manchester, which I have no doubt will be thought satisfactory by all candid and reasonable men; but it will be laid before Parliament, not for the purpose of asking for any opinion on that transaction, but as one of the circumstances which render prospective measures of prevention and remedy indispensable.

The bills will then be introduced. One of them, as I have already said, to prevent traversing in cases of misdemeanour, another on the important subject of seditious meetings.

I do not know whether you have read Lord Erskine's last edition of his "Defence of the Whigs." In the preface to it you will find a paragraph expressing the strongest reprobation of the congregate meetings of people collected from remote parts for the purpose of deliberating upon political matters. Mr.



Brougham appears to have given an opinion to the same effect in a speech which he made at the meeting in Westmoreland.

The principle upon which our measure is founded is that some limitation must be put on these meetings. There appear to be only two modes of limitation, that of numbers, and that of locality. That of numbers would be the most effectual, but it would be the most strong, and would be scarcely practicable consistently with allowing popular meetings at all. It is thought best, therefore, not to have recourse to it, at least in the first instance, and the limitation of locality has therefore been adopted.

The provisions of the proposed measure are as follows :

We except meetings of counties called by the Lord-Lieutenant or Sheriff.

Meetings of corporate towns, called by the mayor, or other first magistrate.

Meetings called by five or more justices of the peace.

In short, meetings under known constituted authorities (the only meetings, by the by, that ever took place fifty years ago).

With these exceptions it is proposed to prohibit all meetings for the consideration of grievances in Church or State, or for the purpose of preparing petitions, &c., except in the parishes (or townships, where parishes are divided into townships) where the individuals usually reside ; and no person is to be allowed to attend such meeting unless he is an actual resident within such parish or township.

To prevent simultaneous meetings previous notice must be given of the day when such meetings are to be held by seven inhabitants to a neighbouring magistrate ; and he is to have a discretion to put off the meetings for days. An exception must of course be made for meetings of trades and special interests, which will be allowed, subject to a limitation of numbers, viz. provided the numbers do not exceed say 300.

It is likewise proposed to prohibit persons coming armed, banners, &c. at all such meetings.

After much consideration, I cannot see any substantial objections to the above proposal. It does not deprive the subject of his right of petitioning, or of political discussion. It subjects it only to such limitation as is necessary for the peace of society.

It gets rid of the great evil of itinerant orators, and of all artificial means of excitement. Novelty and curiosity are great aggravations of the evils of popular meetings. It is difficult to know who attends them, but parochial meetings would generally be flat, and in most cases the gentlemen who live in the parish would have influence enough to check those with whom they are so intimately connected, and whose actions in this respect could not be concealed from them.

The third measure is to prevent training and exercising without licence.

The fourth relates to the state of the press. This is really the root of the evil; but it is far more difficult to deal with than with any other part of the subject. The only satisfactory conclusion at which we have yet arrived is to get rid of the very mischievous cheap publications by extending the principle of the Stamp Duty. The question of injunction, or something equivalent to it, after conviction has been considered, but I am sorry to say without effect. The principal difficulty is that a whole book is hardly ever the subject of prosecution, but certain passages in it. The other difficulty is that one man may be acquitted for what another is convicted, as in the case of Hone. In short, we have not been able to see our way yet in this matter, but I will not despair.

I will now conclude with again thanking you for your communication.

I think it may be material that you should know that the speech and address will probably be of such a nature as not to pass without opposition and much debate.

Yours very faithfully,

To LORD GRENVILLE.

LIVERPOOL.

*Private.*

Dropmore, November 15th, 1819.

MY DEAR LORD,

I am much obliged to you for your communication of the intended measures to be proposed in relation to the present state of the country. I need hardly say that they are in general so accordant with my sentiments as to command my best wishes for their success.

The including the Manchester statement among the papers ex-

planatory of the general state of the country seems unavoidable, but it will create to you some embarrassment in resisting enquiry on that subject. You will have petitions presented praying to be heard in support of some counter statement, which, if complied with, would open the whole inquiry.

But notwithstanding this difficulty, I think you do much better in grounding your measures on the notoriety of the state of the country, and on such facts as you can safely communicate in an open form than on any renewed proceedings of a secret Committee.

With respect to a special commission in October last, or now, I should admit the objection to be valid if such a measure applied to a single case only, that of Hunt, and if it was considered as lessening his rights or means of defence, such as they existed under the ordinary practice. But I had imagined, perhaps erroneously, that, in the more or less disturbed state of almost all the northern circuit, numerous other cases existed to which a general commission would apply. I thought it might be considered, and even accepted by the individuals concerned, as a boon rather than as a grievance, and that some option might even be safely left to them to avail themselves of it or not, whereby no injury could be done to them, while a general disposition would be shown on the part of Government then, and now on the part both of Government and Parliament, to facilitate and accelerate as much as depended on them the course of judicial enquiry, the only proper form of enquiry in this stage of the business. It is obvious also how much this measure would relieve the embarrassment to which I have adverted above.

I am not enough conversant on the subject to judge whether there is any objection to taking away the right of traversing in *all* cases of misdemeanour. My own notions went rather to take this species of misdemeanour in this respect and in that of bail out of the general class of misdemeanours, from which I should be glad to see it as much as possible separated. But very possibly the more extended measure is the best in so far as it relates to traverse.

It certainly would not be so as to bail, and the question of *any* change in that respect would be greatly varied by the effects

produced as to accelerating trial by taking away traverse, and holding more frequent assizes ; a measure to which (as I believe I before said) I attach much more importance than to any other suggestion which I have heard of as a remedy for the present evil.

I will not attempt to enter in a letter into all the difficult and delicate matter which suggests itself as to popular assemblies. The right of any such assembling seems to me to rest rather on the absence of prohibition than on express permission or acknowledgment. That right is limited, like every other, to be so exercised as not to interfere with the public peace, or with the actual safety, and the *assurance* of safety, of the King's other subjects. And in this case, as in others of putting people in danger, or in apprehension of danger, the law, I imagine, lays down the general principle, and leaves its application to be inferred from the facts of each case. So that "numbers may sometimes" (according to an expression which I see is quoted from Forster) "supply the place of arms," not for force only, but also for terror. The Legislature therefore, if it be, perhaps justly, reluctant to take away the right (though, as you truly say, never experienced in this shape before the last fifty years), may properly restrain its abuse by such limitation as shall directly or indirectly lessen that which constitutes the principal danger of such meetings, viz. their numbers.

In the country the limitation to parochial meetings, with the proper exceptions, seems well adapted to that purpose, though even that provision may be difficult in practice. But how will it apply to the metropolis, and the great towns which are at present the chief seat of this evil? The real inhabitants of a single parish may amount then to many thousands or tens of thousands, and are so little known to each other that no person could discriminate in a mob professedly of St. Giles's or St. James's Radicals what portion of them were attracted by curiosity or mischief from other parishes. In these cases I do not well see how the limitation, if any, can be made except by numbers, though much security would result even there from prohibiting any such meeting, however composed, from being held in the open streets, squares, or markets of any populous town.

And as in any form such an enactment must tend, like the bill in which I was formerly concerned, to give something of additional sanction to all that it does not prohibit, it would seem very necessary to embody into it the doctrine which I have above stated, or whatever other may be the true doctrine of our laws on the subject in the form of a very distinct and explicit declaratory clause. The case is exactly that in which declaratory laws are proper and requisite, when the old law can be clearly laid down, such as it always existed, and still exists, but where it has been suffered to fall into desuetude, and is now denied by many, and doubted by more.

I will detain you no further except to say that I do not clearly see the force of your two objections to injunctions immediately following conviction, and prohibiting the sale of works so declared to be blasphemous or seditious.

For, first, though the whole work be not the ground of the conviction, yet it is tainted by the exceptional passages, and may on their account be justly prohibited. Or, the sale might be allowed if those passages be wholly taken out, and an advertisement prefixed announcing that they are so.

And, secondly, there can have been no conviction without the proof of the *corpus delicti*. The book, or its passages, for which A. has been convicted must be such as by law are blasphemous or seditious. But B may be acquitted on the like indictment by defect of proof of publication, or (as the law is now executed) by defect of proof of criminal intention in that act ; this acquittal has therefore no tendency to shake the legal inference which the conviction of A. establishes as to the character of the work itself.

Pray do not trouble yourself to answer this letter. I shall be in town in a few days, and certainly will not fail to attend on the first day, though I am afraid I may be more lax in subsequent attendance even on these subjects than I ought to be.

Believe me ever, my dear Lord,

Most truly yours,

GRENVILLE.

One of Lord Liverpool's letters discloses his apprehensions with respect to Scotland ; and on the western

side of that country, the real distress was far beyond anything that had for years been reported of England. In forwarding a petition from the county of Lanark, the Duke of Hamilton reported to him that, from many of the chief manufacturers in Glasgow having "suspended their works and dismissed their workmen, the surrounding country was half starved." And this was not a figurative expression. The naturally dense population of the district "had been augmented at least tenfold by a population of strangers, chiefly Irish, brought in for manufacturing purposes, whom it was now impossible to maintain." The Duke declared his firm belief that, "unless some relief in the form of work or sustenance was afforded, it was more than probable that before the close of the winter the people would be tearing one another to pieces for want of food. The gentlemen of the country had not the means of supplying relief for the present unemployed poor; and their inclination would diminish with the diminution of their means; and that must be the case as long as the manufacturer continued day after day to increase the evil by curtailing his workmen and diminishing the extent of his work." Lord Liverpool explained to his correspondent that to the relief of a distress so entirely local he should scarcely feel it consistent with his duty to apply the resources of the country at large. He furnished, indeed, a small sum of money from the Treasury sufficient to avert instant calamity; but for the permanent removal of the misery described he could only trust to the gradual effect of the general policy of the Government.

On the 23d of November the Parliament met, and the session, though short, was most active. The ministers were well aware that the Opposition in general, in spite of the defection of Lord Grenville from their ranks, intended to make the recent occurrences a ground for a bitter attack on the whole of their domestic policy. And far from flinching from the encounter, they challenged

it by the language which they put into the mouth of the Regent, who, on this occasion, opened Parliament in person. The royal speech stated plainly that the Houses had been reassembled thus prematurely only on account of "the seditious practices so long prevalent in some of the manufacturing districts, which had recently been continued with increased activity," and recommended the immediate "consideration of such measures as might be requisite for the counteraction and suppression of a system which, if not effectually checked, must bring confusion and ruin on the nation." But Lord Grey found matter for cavil in this recommendation. He believed the representations of the proceedings of the ill-disposed to have been exaggerated. He affirmed that "the existing laws were adequate to put down those men." "The course best calculated to remove the existing discontents was conciliation, and a reduction of the enormous public expenditure which weighed down the country." (He overlooked the great reductions which, as we have seen, had already been effected). He proceeded to draw from the seditions themselves matter for accusation, not of the rioters and their prompters, but of the ministers, for "there never was extensive discontent without great misgovernment." And with these feelings he moved as an amendment, to add to the address which had been proposed some paragraphs pledging the House to institute an enquiry into the events which had taken place at Manchester; the very terms in which they were drawn, and which spoke of "showing that the lives of his Majesty's subjects could not be sacrificed with impunity," showing an inclination to prejudge the case. He was defeated by a majority of 159 to 34; as Lord Lansdowne, when a week later he made a formal motion for the appointment of a select committee to enquire into "the state of the country, and the execution of the laws with respect to the numerous meetings which had lately taken place," was also defeated: the numbers on the second occasion

being 178 to 47. And these divisions were accepted as so decisive by the Opposition, that to the different Acts which the ministers had framed to repress the seditious spirit that was abroad they offered no more than a nominal resistance. The most important of these new laws were : one to prevent military training without the sanction of the Government ; another which extended the meaning of the term "newspaper ;" placed all such publications under regulations designed to facilitate the punishment of their proprietors if they made them vehicles for sedition and blasphemy, and imposed a higher duty on them than had previously been levied ; while a third, which was only of a temporary character, was aimed at seditious meetings. Others regulated trials for offences against the public peace ; authorised the seizure of arms ; and invested the authorities with greater power to take measures of precaution than had before been legal. Lord Liverpool was, as was his habit, and as became his office, the principal advocate of these measures in the Upper House. But it will be sufficient here to give a few extracts from the speeches on the general subject of the Ministerial policy, which he delivered in the debates on the Address and on Lord Lansdowne's motion.

He objected to both Lord Grey's amendment and to Lord Lansdowne's motion, not only as a practical statesman, but as the guardian of the laws ; pointing out that " a Parliamentary enquiry such as was proposed could only be instituted by suspending the functions of the courts of law, and by silencing all subordinate tribunals. For, in respect of many of the events which had taken place, legal proceedings had been begun, and were already far advanced." All the Opposition speakers had levelled violent attacks at Lord Sidmouth, because, immediately after the Manchester meeting, he had conveyed to the magistrates the Regent's full approval of their conduct : Lord Liverpool defended his colleague with great energy ; adopting as his own the advice which the Home Secretary



had tendered to the Prince. "Whatever blame attached to it belonged to himself and to others also of the ministers who had sanctioned the letter. He would undertake most explicitly to say that the Manchester magistrates would not have received the thanks of the Government unless they had done their duty. And on all occasions where it had been considered to have been so performed it had been the custom to give them thanks. How difficult and painful a situation would they stand in if they were at a loss to know whether they had the approbation of his Majesty's Government or not." And having thus laid down the general principle that magistrates who act in good faith, with honest intention, and to the best of their judgment, are entitled to all the protection which the Government can afford, he proceeded to a particular justification of the Manchester authorities by affirming in the most positive manner the illegal character of the meeting in question. On this point he had not only the express support of the Chancellor, but also the negative assent of the whole of the Opposition; for it was remarkable that not one of those who wished to make the recent transactions a plea for an attack on him and his Cabinet, not even Lord Grey, when, in a spirit of almost frantic exaggeration, he doubled the number of those who had been killed, and multiplied tenfold that of those who had been injured, ventured on the assertion that such a meeting was or could have been lawful. And he went on to contend for the great importance of putting an instant stop to such demonstrations, since firmness in preventing such was not inconsistent with the feeling of entire confidence in the generally good disposition of the body of the nation. "The number, indeed, of the disaffected was small as compared with the great aggregate of the people. But their activity was very great, and he was aware of the speed with which they diffused the poison of sedition from one district to another. And it was equally undeniable that in other countries where revolutions had taken place

they had been brought about, not by the number of the disaffected, not by the sedition which they excited, not by the falsehoods which they insinuated, but by the terror of the whole community; terror had been the unfailing engine with which they had effected their mighty mischiefs; and no one could have examined the evidence of what had taken place, and say that there was not a design on the part of many individuals by terror or force to shake the constitution of the country." He drew examples of his assertion from the history both of this kingdom and of France; he having been himself, as we have seen in the first chapters of this book, an eye-witness of some of the opening scenes of the French Revolution. "When the Government of that country was overturned, those who first entertained the project were very much restricted in numbers. In every instance it was the desperate conduct of the few, and the fears of the many, that produced revolution. He would not say, because he did not believe, that the great body of the French people were at first implicated in the revolution which formerly ravaged that country. If any person had told them a few years before that they would soon assist in overturning the monarchy they would have shuddered at the bare idea; but they soon became familiarized with scenes of devastation and massacre. He himself had witnessed the capture of the Bastille, and he had seen even women busy in the work of destruction and slaughter."

By arguments drawn from another country he was equally successful in showing the fallacy of Lord Grey's assertion that the distress which he had pronounced to be the cause of the existing discontent originated in the costly establishments which were kept up in different quarters. "That distress arose from the state of an internal trade which was affected by foreign commerce; and he maintained that, whatever might be the circumstances of that distress, it was not connected with political causes. It was impossible that it should not have happened, that

a war which lasted more than twenty years, a war in which not only this country, but all Europe had been involved, should be followed by great distress in this country as well as in all other countries in Europe. If the noble marquis would inform himself on the subject he would find that this distress existed to as great an extent in the United States of America as in this country: a circumstance which he regretted both on account of America itself, and on account of the effect it had on this country. If their lordships considered the situation of America, they would find there those principles of reform which had spread through this country. The Americans had no king, no nobles, no established Church, no tithes. They had, too, what was called equal representation, and we were told that they had no taxes: yet that country was at that moment more distressed than this, in which all these establishments existed."

He pointed out another cause which had greatly contributed to the existing distress, the marvellous rate at which the population had been continually increasing for more than half a century. "What was the consequence? To meet the great demand for manufactures machinery was introduced, which had a tendency in the end to produce something like a glut in the market. And all these circumstances were most material with reference to the adoption of any measures for the amelioration of the state of the country. Personally he sympathised deeply with the distress. Every man must look with an anxious desire towards any measure which was calculated to afford relief to the lower classes of people in this country, and more especially to the manufacturing population. But the Legislature must proceed with great caution. Measures of that kind could not be viewed as matters of indifference. If they did not effect good, it was possible that they might do much harm, and he believed that for one instance in which benefit was produced by legislative interference in matters of trade and commerce, ten cases might be pointed out

in which injury had been the consequence. This was a doctrine that could not be too often or too strongly impressed on the people of this country. They ought to be taught that evils inseparable from the state of things should not be charged on any government ; and, on enquiry, it would be found that by far the greater part of the miseries of which human nature complained were in all times and in all countries beyond the control of human legislation.

“ ‘ How small, of all the ills that men endure,  
The part which kings or states can cause or cure.’ ”

He was arguing here not only in a statesmanlike but in a peculiarly English spirit. The legislature of no other country whatever has shown so vigilant and constant a solicitude for the welfare of the poorer classes ; no other has so generally abstained from interference with the details and operations of trade ; and it is almost equally demonstrable that the pre-eminent prosperity of our trading classes of every kind has been caused, or at least very greatly aided and promoted, by that judicious abstinence.

On no point, perhaps, was Lord Liverpool more successful than when, adopting an illustration drawn from Lord Grenville's recent letters, he placed in a strong light the consequences which would flow from an assertion on which Lord Lansdowne had ventured, that meetings designed to promote the attainment of a political object were necessarily legal. “ He conceived that opinion to be altogether erroneous. On such a principle the people might meet to alter the succession to the Crown. For, if the doctrine laid down by the noble Lord were true, that the people had a right to meet to petition Parliament to do any act which was within its power, it could not be contended that even an alteration of the line of succession was beyond that power.”

Finally, he affirmed that “ with the exception of the measure authorising the search for arms, which was of a temporary and local nature, all the others which had been

introduced were consistent with the existing laws and principles of the Constitution. They were indeed proposed in furtherance of the principles of the Constitution, and for the purpose of protecting the people of this country against a series of evils which, if not checked, must subvert their laws and liberties. If they looked at this question in a proper point of view, they would see that whatever they might have gained by commercial exertions, whatever benefit they might have derived from the persecutions which had driven individuals from other countries, they might be deprived of them all if they did not guard against the persecutions of a mob. The fear of the mob invariably led to arbitrary government, and the best friends of liberty were therefore those who put down popular commotion, and secured the inhabitants of the country in the peaceable enjoyment of their rights."

So manifest was the absolute necessity for such measures as the ministers now recommended, that even in the House of Commons the Opposition could never muster above 150 votes to resist them, and in every division on which they ventured were beaten by more than double their own numbers. And this assent of the country to the policy of the Cabinet, and to the explanation of the grounds of that policy given by the Prime Minister himself, was seen to be so general that all opposition in Parliament was presently withdrawn ; all the Acts which the ministers introduced were passed through every stage in both Houses before the end of the year ; and on the 29th of December they adjourned till the 15th of February. Before that day arrived they were again assembled in consequence of an event which within a few days of their dispersion was seen to be rapidly approaching, the death of the aged king, George III. When the hour actually arrived one of his sons who was in vigorous health at the opening of the year was also lying dead. The Duke of Kent had caught a sudden cold, which brought on an inflammation of the lungs, of which, after a few days'

illness, he died at Sidmouth on the 23d of January. And that day week the King himself passed away by a death so easy that it was difficult to fix the exact minute at which he had ceased to exist.

Long as he had been removed from the sight of his subjects, the intelligence that he was completely taken from them caused very general sorrow. No monarch had ever been so popular. England had had kings whom she could respect, such as William III., but he was a prince who loved nothing English and whom no Englishman could love. His unfailing good-humour, his affable urbanity, and his social qualities had endeared Charles II. to the generality of his subjects, though even he never flattered himself with the idea that he awakened their respect. Since the third Edward, or, at latest, the fifth Henry, no sovereign had at once won the affection and compelled the esteem of his subjects. But George III. was loved more widely than Charles, and esteemed more sincerely than William. He had all the frank courtesy of the merry monarch, combined with a kindly heartiness and sincerity of friendliness which was wanting to his predecessors' greetings; and if he was deficient in the statesmanlike sagacity and diplomatic address of the shrewd Dutchman, he was still more free from his private and public vices. There was no Lady Orkney about the court to draw tears from his Queen, or to provoke the Commons into recalling grants lavished in vain to satiate her rapacity. No valleys of Glencoe ran with blood to bear a lasting witness to the treacherous barbarity of the monarch whose first boast had been that he had been "born a Briton." And if those who had not yet forgotten the charms of his familiar presence were saddened with a grave sorrow at the departure of him whom, in addition to his other claims to their goodwill, they had so long revered as their sovereign, the historian may also on his part fitly recall attention for a moment to the absolutely unequalled glories of his long and eventful

reign ; the grandest in every circumstance of greatness which is recorded in the annals of any country in the world, in any period of ancient or modern history.

It was not indeed a period of unbroken triumph. On the contrary, its earlier years were marked with what at the time was looked upon as an event of unprecedented, irremediable calamity, the loss of the greater part of Britain's American provinces. Yet even the war which rent from his dominion those magnificent colonies was not without its consolatory, it might even be said its splendid side. It had been graced by Rodney's victory off Port Royal, the most brilliant and decisive triumph that as yet illustrated our naval history. It had established us for ever in the possession of Gibraltar, an outpost whose importance, till we became masters of Malta, was indispensable to the maintenance of our influence as a maritime power in the Mediterranean ; and in the East it had seen the organization and rapid extension of a dominion compared with which even our American colonies were barren and valueless. But, as events proved, the American war was but a prelude to a longer, sterner, and more vital struggle. Unfavorable as, on the whole, it proved both to our fortunes and to our renown, it was yet not altogether unfortunate that we had been engaged in it. The first brunt of the conflict with Revolutionary France fell mainly on our navy : the American war had afforded a training ground, and Rodney's fleet a nursery and school for our seamen,<sup>1</sup> and we may fairly believe that the foundation of those uninterrupted triumphs, in which our navy set the example that our army so nobly followed, was laid amid the vicissitudes of the melancholy conflict in which the heedless impolicy of our administrators

<sup>1</sup> Lord Howe had a separate command : Lord Hood, Captain Gardner (afterwards Lord Gardner), Cornwallis, Saumarez, Graves, afterwards third in command at Copenhagen, and Nelson himself (though on detached service) were all under the command of Rodney in 1781-2.

armed Britain's transatlantic children against herself. No Englishman need be reminded, of what cursory notices even in these volumes have recorded, the exploits by which, before the war closed, our soldiers equalled the achievements and the renown of our sailors; or how, as Nelson and his "band of brothers" eclipsed the deeds and the fame of all former seamen of any country, so Wellington and his lieutenants outdid even the triumphs of Marlborough, and proved British valour to be equally indomitable on land and on sea.

Nor were the peaceful glories of the reign less remarkable. In philosophy and science it was indeed probably impossible to equal the fame of Bacon and of Newton, but they had worthy followers, and the discoveries of Herschel in astronomy, of Davy in chemistry, of Arkwright and Watt in mechanics, with those of a host of other labourers in kindred pursuits, fully maintained the pre-eminence of Britain in such studies that those great leaders had established; while those who devoted themselves to art and literature were still more numerous and at least equally successful. In these respects no other period can advance so strong a claim to be considered the golden age of England as that in which Reynolds and Gainsborough painted, Flaxman and Chantrey breathed life into the stubborn marble, and in which every branch of literature was cultivated with an assiduity and genius which has bequeathed imperishable memorials to posterity. It was now that for the first time modern historians rivalled alike the deep sagacity and the picturesque descriptions of Thucydides and Livy: that orators, whether in the Senate or at the Bar, enabled a modern audience to realize the energy with which Demosthenes and Cicero had shaken not only Athens and Rome, but the whole length and breadth of the civilized world. And though, in their own line of composition, Shakespeare and Milton may be allowed to stand on the same unapproachable eminence which we have ascribed to Bacon and



Newton, yet no other name among their predecessors can surpass, and very few can vie with those masters of the lyre who embellished and delighted this reign throughout the whole of its long duration. It is not too much to assert that there is no period of sixty years whatever in which any nation whatever has produced so many men of the highest genius, of the most admirable courage and virtue, and of undying reputation, as, during the reign which was now brought to a close, Britain brought forth for the adornment, the instruction, and, in its later portion, for the preservation of Europe.

END OF VOL. II.

